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NOTICE

Effective 1 January 1983, this report series is being reorganized and retitled the SOUTHEAST ASIA REPORT. Material on the South Asian countries--Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka--that now appears in it will be published instead in the JPRS NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT. Also effective 1 January 1983, the JPRS VIETNAM REPORT is being discontinued. Vietnam material will subsequently be incorporated into the SOUTHEAST ASIA REPORT.

28 December 1982

SOUTH AND EAST ASIA REPORT

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CONTENTS

BANGLADESH

Reorganization of Thana Administration Explained (THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 7 Nov 82)	1
Food Minister Details Government Food Policy (Abdul Gaffar Mahmood; THE BANGLADESH TIMES, 7 Nov 82) ...	13

BURMA

Briefs New Ambassador to Nigeria	17
-------------------------------------	----

INDIA

Gandhi Interviewed on French Ties, Afghan, Domestic Issues (Indira Gandhi Interview; LE MONDE, 27 Nov 82)	18
--	----

LAOS

Article Notes Good Development of LPDR's Foreign Trade (Vu Huu Tuu; NGOAI THUONG, Dec 81)	23
Editorial Hails Socialist Republic of Vietnam National Day (Editorial; SIANG PASASON, 2 Sep 82)	29
Vietnamese Cooperation in Boat Construction Described (B. Kongmali; SIANG PASASON, 2 Sep 82)	32
Keng Kabao Port Capacity, Construction Progress Noted (Bounya Saipanya; SIANG PASASON, 3 Sep 82)	34

PAKISTAN

Pakistani Political Leader on Haq's U.S. Visit (Ghafoor Ahmad; NAWA-I-WAQT, 9 Dec 82)	36
'JANG' Comments on Reagan's Assurances to Pakistan (Editorial; JANG, 9 Dec 82)	38

THAILAND

Opinion Poll Notes Leadership Preferences (Sirimana Sattamai; PATINYA, 29 Nov 82)	40
Case for Baht Devaluation Argued (Phansak Winyarat; KHAO CHATURAT, 29 Nov 82)	48
Protests, Commentaries on Bus Fare Increase Reported (Various sources, various dates)	57
Economic Issues, Dissatisfaction	
Editorial Notes Popular Anger	
Student Organization Statements, Individuals	

REORGANIZATION OF THANA ADMINISTRATION EXPLAINED

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 7 Nov 82 pp 5, 7

[Text] The primary objective of decentralising the administration by the Government is to bring it closer to the people. Thana, the most significant tier in the multi-tier administration is being reorganised. Under the reorganised set-up each thana will constitute focal point of all administrative activities.

The reorganised administrative set-up at thana level will be introduced in phases and in the first phase 45 thanas will be brought under the reorganised set-up from today. These thanas will cease to be part of subdivisional administration and will function directly under the district administration.

Under this reorganised administrative set-up, responsibility of all development activities at the local level will be transferred to the Thana Parishad to be headed by an elected Chairman. The Government will, however, retain for the present the direct responsibility for regulatory functions and major development activities of national and regional coverage.

The services of officers dealing with subjects transferred to the Thana Parishad will be deemed to have been placed at the disposal of the Thana Parishad Government and respective Departments, however, will continue to be responsible for the appointment, transfer, promotion, discipline and remuneration of these officers.

The officers dealing with the subjects retained by the Government will be answerable to the Thana Parishad which will be competent to call for report from these officers on their activities and also summon them for hearing. Thana Parishad will also be entitled to cause inspection of their offices and report to Government on any lapse in the discharge of their duties which may come to the notice of the Parishad. Thana Parishad will also provide the necessary assistance to enable these officers to function effectively in the Thanas.

The Thana Nirbahi officer will act as Chairman of Thana Parishads till such time the Chairmen of Thana Parishads are elected.

Appointments of Thana Nirbahi officer and other Thana officers under the reorganised administrative set-up in 45 thanas have been made and they have already been imparted three-day training on their duties and functions under the new set-up.

The following are the duties of Thana Nirbahi officer and other officers:

Thana Nirbahi Officer

The Thana Nirbahi officer will be staff officer to the elected Chairman who will be the chief executive of Thana. He will also be the chief executive officer of the Thana Parishad, shall be responsible to the Chairman of Thana Parishad and assist him in implementation of policies and decisions of the Thana Parishad.

He will assist the Chairman in supervising all thana level development and administrative work. He also assists the Parishad in preparing a coordinated development plan of the thana and ensure its execution.

He will exercise preventive jurisdiction of a First Class Magistrate under Sections 133, 144 and 145 of Cr PC in order to maintain law and order in the thana area.

He will initiate Annual Confidential Report of all thana level officers except Magistrate Munsiff. The Chairman, Thana Parishad, will be the countersigning officer. District officers of respective departments will be the technical reporting officers of Thana officers.

He will attend emergency duties such as relief duties following natural calamities, receive stores including food and distribute relief materials as directed by Thana Parishad. He will also perform Protocol duties.

The Thana Nirbahi Officer will supervise and control revenue and budget administration of the thana. He will ensure that the Government directives on Thana administration are followed. He will coordinate all thana level training activities and perform such other functions as may be entrusted to him by the Government or the Thana Parishad Chairman or as may be conferred on him by the Government under any law.

Thana Health and Family Planning Officer

Thana Health and Family Planning Officer will work under the guidance of Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will be responsible for all clinical and technical supervision and guidance to all professional and technical personnel to ensure optimum service to both outpatient and inpatient departments. He will be directly responsible for implementation of all operation cases and operation in the field of family planning both ligation and vasectomy.

He will have the managerial and administrative responsibility to ensure proper maintenance of the Thana Health Complex including its outpatient department, wards and OT, laboratory and kitchen, etc. He will also assign specific duties and responsibilities to his subordinate officers.

The Medical Officers should be allocated defined geographical area of responsibility covering specified number of unions and villages which they should visit as a routine and hold family planning camps on fixed schedules with occasional unscheduled supervisory visit.

He will ensure that thana level supervisors, officers working under him contact the Union Parishad schools and specific representative groups to ascertain their health needs and demands and follow-up previously noted needs by regularly inspecting the areas.

He will ensure that family planning programme is fully implemented in his area. He will also monitor the two way referral and information pathways and logistic systems between the Thana Health complex and villages and ensure the implementation of health programme. He will visit the Unions and villages regularly to acquaint himself with the problems and achievements of health and family planning activities.

He will be responsible to discharge Health and Family Planning programme through primary health care service which include (a) Communicable disease control, (b) Expanded immunization programme, (c) Family Planning, (d) Maternity and child health care, (e) Prevention and control of locally endemic diseases, (f) Health education and training, (g) Improvement of water and (h) Provision of first aid.

Thana Education Officer

Thana Education Officer will work as the chief functionary of the Ministry of Education at thana level and will work under the guidance of Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi officer.

He will be responsible for the execution of all directives related to primary education and work under the direction of Primary Education Officer Area Project Officer.

He will make field trips on at least 15 days, including 5 overnight stays in a month, for the purpose of inspection of schools, supervision and public relations. He will prepare an annual programme for inspection of schools and submit it for approval to the Primary Education Officer/Area Project Officer. The annual programme must ensure that every school is inspected at least twice in a year.

He will maintain a separate file for every primary school. This file will contain all information regarding the history and present status of the teachers, students and assets of the school. This file will be updated every six months.

He will be responsible for the administration of all officers and employees of his office and write their Annual Confidential Reports for submission to the Primary Education Officer/Area Project Officer.

He will act as the receiving and disbursing officer in respect of the funds made available for payment of salaries to the Assistant Thana Education Officers, other employees and teachers, and for meeting other incidental expenses.

He will prepare proposals for the payment of pension and gratuity to the employees and teachers under him and send these proposals to the higher authorities for approval.

He will specify 15 to 20 schools, on the average, for inspection by each of his Assistant Education Officers with the approval of Primary Education Officer/Area Project Officer, supervise and evaluate their activities.

He will collect with the help of Assistant Thana Education Officer all the necessary data related to the promotion of primary education in his area and supply these information regularly to the higher authorities.

Thana Agriculture Officer

Thana Agriculture Officer will work under the guidance of Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will be responsible for the management and supervision, planning, implementation and evaluation of agricultural extension programme as well as coordination of all agricultural development works within his unit.

He will coordinate the distribution of inputs such as fertilizer, seed, irrigation equipment and improved agricultural implements. He will also coordinate demonstration and propagation of improved agricultural methods and practices and establishment and maintenance of model agricultural farms in private lands, excavation and re-excavation of canals for drainage, irrigation and communication, thana irrigation projects and inter-union schemes.

He will also be responsible for intensive paddy cultivation, jute and rabi crops campaign, increasing production of fruits and vegetables, organisation of fairs and crop competition, etc., preparation of cow dung manure and preparation of compost, reclamation of land for productive purposes with approval of Thana Parishad, establishment and maintenance of godowns, and maintenance of farmers service centres with attached demonstration farms.

He will exercise line functions over all extension and supply personnel and be responsible for installation and maintenance of tubewells and pumps.

Thana Engineer

Thana Engineer will work under the guidance of the Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will maintain close liaison with the district level officers and particularly with the Executive Engineers on technical matters required for execution of works of the national Government as per procedures, rules and regulations.

He will be responsible for the construction of Thana complex under the control and guidance of the Executive Engineer, and for planning and preparation of schemes and execution of all development works of the Thana Parishad.

He will also be responsible for preparation and submission of the estimates of development maintenance and repair works pertaining to the Thana Parishad, acquisition and preservation of stores for the development, maintenance and repair work in his charge and maintaining systematic stock account as per rules and supervision of the works of Thana Parishad including maintaining site order book, job diary and site account of the materials at site.

He will maintain proper accounts as per rules and procedures for the expenditure of the works done under him. He will be responsible for maintaining proper accounts as per rules and procedures for the expenditure of the works done under him. He will be responsible for maintaining proper security measures for the protection of materials and stores and for timely verification of materials and stores.

He will review the progress of development works in coordination with concerned departments and agencies and advise Thana Parishad on all technical matters relating to construction and maintenance works within the thana.

He will undertake the preparation and maintenance of Thana Planning Book and remain responsible for its upkeep. He will also undertake construction and repair of bunds and embankments.

Thana Co-operative Officer

Thana Cooperative Officer will work under the guidance of Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi officer.

He will register cooperatives on fulfillment of necessary formalities and draw up annual audit programme and issue audit orders.

He will assign audit works to the inspections and see that the audit work is done as per programme. He will guide audit officers in the efficient performance of their assigned duties and issue instructions for quality improvement of audit. He will assess audit fees, prepare lists of societies for timely realisation of audit fees and review, audit notes and issue orders for rectification.

He will inspect the cooperative societies as well as the offices of the subordinate officers and conduct inquiry into the affairs of societies in conformity with cooperative Acts and Rules. He will make an enquiry upon a written complaint against any officers and take steps for settlement of disputes involving cooperative societies and declare award as per cooperative Acts and Rules.

He will take prompt action for distribution of loan among the members and make an assessment of loan requirement of cooperative societies. He will see that the purpose for which loan is advanced is properly utilized. He will issue necessary orders for timely recovery of loan, supervise the collection of drive initiated for recovery of loan, and explore all possibilities for recovery of outstanding loan.

He will also organise group discussion among the cooperators, coordinate the activities of different types of cooperatives and take steps for evaluation of cooperative activities and follow up action in the light of evaluation.

He will be responsible for the preparation of annual budget, supervise the activities of staff and act as drawing and disbursing officer.

He will prepare reports, returns, etc, collect annual statistics on cooperatives and highlight the activities of cooperatives and keep the authority informed of the same.

Thana Livestock Officer

Thana Livestock Officer will work under the guidance of Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi officer.

He will be responsible for vaccination against contagious and infectious diseases of livestock and poultry, improvement of livestock and poultry breeds, extension. Motivation and training of farmers regarding scientific rearing of livestock and poultry and extension, motivation and training of farmers on cultivation of high yielding varieties of fodder.

He will initiate and prepare development scheme/projects and arrange to execute the same after due approval by the TP/ZP, and participate in the implementation of special projects at national level.

He will be responsible for maintenance of stores and equipment and undertake survey of livestock and poultry resources and potential. He will review the activities in his sector and report to Thana Nirbahi Officer about the activities and also maintain contact with research centres both at national and regional level.

He will be responsible for distribution of improved poultry and other livestock, establishment and maintenance of poultry farms for multiplication of improved breed as approved by the department and provision and maintenance of veterinary aid centres.

Thana Fishery Officer

Thana Fishery Officer will work under the guidance of Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi officer.

He will participate in management of khas fisheries (jalmahal including collection, compilation and interpretation of biological data to ensure harvest at sustainable yield level.

He will undertake extension service on aquaculture, fishery resources survey, preparation and supervision of implementation production plan. He will be responsible for enforcement of different fishery laws, collection, compilation and interpretation of socio-economic, marketing and similar other data on fisheries and mobilisation and coordination of input supplies including credit for fisheries development.

He will also be responsible for planning for fish production, marketing and transportation, monitoring and evaluation of fisheries project and training and motivation of fish farmers, fishermen and preparation of training schedule. He will review the activities and report them to concerned authorities.

He will carry out scientific pisc culture in ponds and reservoirs and be responsible for stocking of fish in tanks and reservoirs in Thana Headquarters and supervision of fisheries in the Union. He will also participate in the implementation of special projects at national level.

Thana Social Welfare Officer

Thana Social Welfare Officer will work under the guidance of Thana Parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will exercise overall supervision of the work and guidance to rural social service programme personnel of the thana and take care of all establishment matters pertaining to his Thana office.

He will conduct socio-economic surveys of programme villages in order to identify felt needs of such villages and identify various groups, namely the children, the youth, the women and the elderly people from among the disadvantaged segments of the population of the programme villages for income generating activities including skill development training for such groups.

He will be responsible for organisation and motivation of the community for attaining the objectives of rural social service programme, programme development and implementation of such programme, mobilization of community

resource organising various socio-economic activities, namely, family planning, nutrition, functional education and child health care in the project villages and arranging approval of socio-economic schemes by the competent authorities.

He will organise training of field staff and community to help in attaining project objectives and ensure proper utilization of all resources, cash and kind-placed at his disposal for development of programme in the thana.

He will devise ways and means to utilise voluntary social welfare agencies in the thana for social work activities and be responsible for supervision of and guidance to all voluntary agencies registered with the Department of Social Welfare located in the thana.

He will coordinate activities of departmental programme with other nation building departments of the programme of thana and submit prescribed periodical reports and returns to the appropriate authorities of the thana and the department. He will also undertake evaluation of the department programme of the thana.

Thana Rural Development Officer

Thana Rural Development Officer will work under the guidance of the thana parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will supervise, recruit, train and promote TCCA staff, coordinate the activities of the TCCA and delegate powers to the subordinates and ensure timely entries of books and registers.

He will be responsible for all necessary purchases and sales, preparation of budgets, annual stock statements, reports and returns for the higher authorities and secretary's reports for presentation to the annual general meeting.

He will supervise and inspect field staff, KSS's TIP groups and other schemes and will be responsible for organising the supply of inputs and credit to the members, formation of own capital and planning for agricultural marketing.

He will promote the implementation of new and improved techniques in agriculture and other extension activities such as TCCA women programme, etc. will also promote "Comilla type" cooperatives, organise farmers into cohesive and disciplined groups for planned development, encourage enrolment of new members cooperation between KSS's and liquidate dormant societies.

He will plan and organise training programmes for model farmers, KSS managers, TCCA field staff and KSS directors and members and also plan for and participate in the meetings of the TCCA, participate as the TCCA representative in meetings at district thana levels and participate as far as possible in meetings of the primary societies.

He will advise and guide the managing committee of the TCCA on acts, rules and central policy decisions and refer to higher authorities in case of doubt.

Thana Statistical Officer

Thana Statistical Officer will work under the guidance of thana parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will perform all duties at the field level as per directives received from the Statistical Head Office at Dhaka/District Statistical Office from time to time. He will ensure proper administration and management of the Thana Statistical Office by proper distribution of work amongst the field personnel at administrative functions of the thana statistical office and provide all assistance to thana parishad with respect to thana statistics required for thana development.

He will collect actual income and expenditure accounts annually of all Pourashavas and Union Councils located within the thana and submit it to Dhaka headquarters through district statistical office. He will collect and compile statistics on all development projects under the Food for Work Programme, Union Council Programme and annual development programme of the government and other agencies. He will also collect and compile statistics on all development projects undertaken by Non-Government Organisations (NGO) and other private agencies within the thana.

He will carry out the following functions in respect of current agricultural statistics:

- a. Periodical observation of sample clusters located in the thana and submit observation report.
- b. Crop cutting experiments with respect to rice, jute and other selected crops in plots located within and outside clusters.
- c. Collection of selected statistical information from agricultural and other statistics of the cluster mouza (mouzas in which sample clusters are located) and
- e. Collection of selected information from all offices in the thana on quarterly and annual basis for compiling thana development indicators.

The Thana Statistical Officer will also perform the following field operations in connection with nationwide agriculture census programme:

- a. Delineation of enumeration areas in mouzas and locate them on mouza maps supplied by headquarters.
- b. Selection and appointment of supervisors and enumerators for the agricultural census from amongst the local educated unemployed youths and other persons.

c. Preparation of mouza profile by filling up the forms supplied by the headquarters and return by the prescribed date.

d. Undertaking training required for performing the functions of zonal officer in the agricultural census.

e. Imparting training to agricultural census supervisors and enumerators on the basis of verbatim training manual prepared by the headquarters and

f. Performance of all logistics and other field functions in connection with agricultural census.

He will also prepare lists of all hats and bazars in the thana and collect prices paid and received by farmers on the basis of actual transactions monitored in selected hats, bazars and households, conduct sample surveys and censuses with respect to cottage industry, establishment, land occupancy, household income and expenditure, rural construction, trade and other non-agricultural activities in the thana, and prepare and update maps of all existing and new clusters in all unions of the thana and also complete measure of all plots in the clusters adopting triangulation method.

He will collect phasewise statistics of all mouzas according to instruction received from the headquarters and the district statistical office and compile "thana statistical source book" for use of all thana level officers, local bodies and the general public and perform all field duties in respect of population and other census and also major sample/surveys and programmes as per directives received from the Headquarter and the district statistical office.

Thana Mass Communication Officer

Thana Mass Communication Officer will work under the guidance of thana parishad as coordinated by Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will execute publicity of the policies of the government thana parishad through direct mass contact and inter-personal communication and hold group gatherings and public meeting to disseminate information and educate the general masses in rural areas on development activities of the government/thana parishad.

He will hold cinema shows in rural areas by the mobile cinema units on development activities of the government and send news to PID/BSS regarding development activities of the thana parishad for publication in the news-papers. He will provide PAE coverage and facilities for meetings etc., of the government/thana parishad and supervise exhibition of government news-reels in the cinema halls.

He will supervise distribution of pamphlets, booklets and posters of all department and of the government/thana parishad and prepare public reaction on the various activities of the government and sent it to government/thana parishad.

He will maintain liaison/coordination with all government departments located in the thana.

Munsiff

Munsiffs will try regular civil suits up to the valuation Tk 20,000 and SCC suits up to the valuation of Tk 3,000 by Munsiffs at thana level (subject to amendment).

Senior Munsiffs vested with special powers shall have jurisdiction to try regular suits up to the valuation of Tk 50,000 and SCC suits up to the valuation of Tk 5,000 (subject to amendment).

The Munsiffs will also hear and dispose of money suits and all other miscellaneous cases.

He will act as ex-officio rent controller and decide matters connected with it, and grant succession certificates, probates and letters of administration in uncontested cases.

The duties of the Munsiffs also include hearing of court fee, value of stamp matters etc. arising out of suits and cases filed by the parties, hearing and disposal of interlocutory matters arising of suits and cases pending in the court hearing and disposal of excases filed by the parties for execution of the decrees and order, general administration and superintendence of his court and office administration and superintendence of Nezarat accounts coping department, record room and library, making correspondence with government and Supreme Court through District Judge, making correspondence with District Judge in respect of office administration; holding annual inspection of his court office and departments attached with and submission of inspection reports to the District Judge.

Thana Magistrate

Thana Magistrate will be vested with sufficient magisterial powers to enable him to take cognizance and disposal of criminal cases. He will function independently of thana administration.

Thana Revenue Officer

Thana Revenue Officer will work under the guidance of Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will maintain land records of rights, and collect land revenue with the help of Tahsildars.

He will be responsible for mutation and separation of khas and updating of records with the transfer of ownership of land. He will also make settlement of khas land reclaimed lands and maintain up-to-date records.

His duties also include disposal of rent certificate case collection of unrecovered government revenue and government dues instituting certificate cases against the defaulters.

Officer-in-Charge Police Station

Officer-in-charge of a police station will maintain public order under supervision of Thana Nirbahi officer.

He will be responsible for police administration of the thana, prevention, detection and investigation of crime, college of intelligence, execution of processes and all other duties as per police regulation and government order.

Thana Ansar and VDP Officer

Thana Ansar and VDP officer will work under the guidance of Thana Nirbahi Officer.

He will assist the police in maintenance of public order and take part in development activities as directed by thana parishad.

He will act as auxiliary force to regular forces in guarding VPs/KPIs and in national emergency.

CSO: 4600/1342

FOOD MINISTER DETAILS GOVERNMENT FOOD POLICY

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 7 Nov 82 Supplement pp 2-3, 7

[Article by Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) Abdul Gaffar Mahmood]

[Text] Food Policy: Increasing food production in a developing country remains the primary focus in the fight against poverty, hunger and malnutrition. The widespread realization of the urgency of handling the food problems has led many developing countries to reassess the priority given to food. The Food Policy strategy as evolved by the FAO Council in Sept 1979 emphasises purposive analyses of production, consumption, marketing and overall food management problems.

Food problem is by far the most critical issue in our struggle to attain both social and economic stability. It is firstly a production problem and then a management problem. Food Policy in Bangladesh encompasses various inter-related issues like production, demand and supply, movement, marketing, management, resource mobilization, institutional infrastructure. The essential elements of the country's food policy strategies are:-

- a) Increasing food production and its rational distribution with least possible use of resources.
- b) Production, movement, distribution and consumption of food without undue and extreme fluctuation of a transitory nature.
- c) Restructuring public distribution system for attainment of a measure of fairness in food distribution as well as assurance of enough food for the needy.
- d) Attainment of self-sufficiency.
- e) Building up security reserves for stabilising market and meeting unforeseen emergencies.
- f) Continued price support programmes to the growers.
- g) Promotion of market intelligence and institutional infrastructures for effective food management.

The hardcore of today's food policy issues are:

- I) to manage and operate country's overall food system;
- ii) to strengthen the implementation of national food policy programmes; and
- iii) to establish a dependable food security system in the country.

Supply and Demand Strategies: Sluggish growth and high variability have characterized food production in Bangladesh over the past three decades. The growth in staple food production, i.e. rice and wheat, fell behind population growth during the last two decades which has necessitated increasing level of food assistance imports. In spite of avowed objective of successive plan documents to achieve self-sufficiency in food production, the goal has become rather difficult to attain. Foodgrain production in Bangladesh over a period of the last fifteen years is estimated at about 2 percent per annum on average compared to 2.7 percent population growth rate during the same period. The net result of this sluggish performance has been continuous food insecurities and food imports to meet the need.

In realization of the seriousness of this continued imbalance in the country's food situation, the Government has renewed the emphasis on agricultural development, particularly on food production. The Medium Term Food Production Plan (1980-1985) is committed to achieve a rate of 6.5 percent production growth per annum. Such high rates of growth are indeed necessary for achieving self-sufficiency in food over the plan period. It is, however, a fact food self-sufficiency in Bangladesh is achievable despite rather disappointing records in the past. With an increase of about 13 lac tons in a single production season, the production record has already touched a new record of 14.7 million tons in 1980-81. Boro and Wheat in the meantime have made record level production of 3.1 and 1.1 million tons respectively. Despite continued unfavourable weather conditions during the last few months, a conservative estimate of about 15 million tons has been made for the current crop season. The national food gap has already been reduced to a little over one million tons from that of 2.6/ 2.7 million tons during the early span of '70s.

In order to increase productivity, Bangladesh has laid top priority to the massive development as well as expansion of irrigation and modern agricultural inputs. Effects have also been made to improve the financial, managerial, operational and institutional logistics along with physical input mobilization. The pursuits for a developed and stable food policy strategies are not limited to the production efforts only. These are equally followed by well-planned food management and system policy approaches and infrastructural developments in all facets of the food system, i.e.-- movement, distribution, storage, processing, quality control, management, information, security, reserves, marketing and trade early warning, etc.

In the backdrop of our continued vulnerabilities in the food sector, a comprehensive plan of actions have been on development, as follows, to rapidly move toward a balanced net of food system in the country.

- a) Adoption of foodgrain stock and distribution policies.
- b) Proper management and release of stocks.
- c) Measures to feed the low income and vulnerable poor.
- d) Development of a viable food security system.
- e) Collective self-reliance through price support programme, co-operative marketing efforts and reserve maintenance.

The policies outlined above constitute an integrated package to ameliorate food problem in Bangladesh. The policy approaches in the fields of procurement, distribution, imports, marketing, stock building and management infrastructures have been designed to be consistent with each other and at the same time intended for developing the entire food system.

With the objectives of achieving growth equity and stability in our food strategy, a more rational as well as pragmatic approach in the food distribution mechanisms and policies has since been evolved. Food collected through imports and internal procurement is channeled out through a number of distribution media to both urban and rural people. It is geared towards providing subsidized food grains to certain people. Outflows from the underprivileged segments of Government stock consist mainly of statutory rationing, modified rationing, priority distribution, open market sales, market operation, emergency relief operation, large employers, food for work etc. To rationalize the public distribution system and to promote the market mechanism, the following measures have been adopted:

1. more distribution to the rural poor and needy.
2. open market sales and market operation.
3. gradual restriction of ration distribution [as publish].
4. reduction of subsidies on public food distribution.

In order to provide price support to the growers, mobilize national security and operational reserves and also to promote market stability, domestic procurement of a food grains has long been a gigantic operation. It involves extensive field activities up to the village level. It is no more a seasonal and crop based operation. The whole operation has now turned into a countrywide round the year task. The Government has now to maintain as many as 800 procurement centres. The highest procurement in the last decade was 10.16 lac tons in 1980-81 and lowest 0.7 lac tons in 1973-74.

Government has been continuously pursuing for an active stock policy in the sense of keeping certain minimum stock levels to ensure a continuing availability of foodgrains. Stocks which have been accumulated in the past would appear to have resulted more by chance than by a clearly elaborated programme. To provide for the food security of a country it is first necessary to ensure that the normal mechanisms are capable of handling the day to day food requirements of the country. This requires that adequate provision is made to make available sufficient supplies of food from indigenous sources and from imports. As for food security reserves, we have been continuously endeavouring to build up at least 1.5 million tons stock level in the form of dead stock, operational stock and emergency stock.

It is experienced that storage plays an important role at various stages of food management and operations. In effect, storage is an integral part of the food system. Interventions in the food sector and food security reserve programmes require substantial capacity for stocking and distributing food. The maintenance of a continuous flow of food from one point to another point needs sufficient storage capacity of each point in the food chain. The Food Division now owns storage facility nominally rated at 1.65 million tons besides a hired provision of about .15 million tons. This storage space includes some of the newly constructed godowns. Construction of several (on-going and pipeline) godowns under various programmes are planned to be completed by June '84. All these new schemes, when completed, would provide a maximum storage capacity (for rice, wheat and salt) of about 2.0 million tons. For proper and effective storage system, both bulk and bagging storage facilities have been developed.

In a chronic food deficit economy of Bangladesh the post-harvest loss due to traditional processing system is obviously a threat to the country's food policy and strategies. Improved processing system can produce higher out-turns of rice and qualitative by-products and can reduce the storage, transit and handling losses and can also reduce post-harvest losses to a great extent. To this object multitude of development programmes have been taken up to set up automatic rice mills, driers, automatic handling and loading facilities, etc. at the major food strategic points.

It is evident that the envisaged expansion of food output in the Second Five-Year Plan (SFYP) will bring about a wholesome change in private grain trade and marketing to the desired extent as a result of improvement in the supply situation. In recent years about 85 percent of marketing of domestic food production has been done through private traders. More than half of the projected increase in food output is likely to be marketed through the private sector even though the Government procurement will be four times the quantity procured in recent normal harvesting years.

Sufficient food production, developed and efficient marketing by the private sector, backed up by a balanced national food security net where public distribution system has an effective role are the necessary precondition for a stable food situation in any country. The objective is to ensure "availability of foodgrain for all."

CSO: 4600/1342

BURMA

BRIEFC

NEW AMBASSADOR TO NIGERIA--An agreement has been accorded to the proposed appointment of His Excellency Mr Theopilus Oladega Ayinla Asiwaju-Dada as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma in succession to His Excellency Chief J. O. Omolodun. [Excerpt] [BK161422 Rangoon WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY in English 4 Dec 82 p 1 BK]

CSO: 4200/223

INDIA

GANDHI INTERVIEWED ON FRENCH TIES, AFGHAN, DOMESTIC ISSUES

PM021451 Paris LE MONDE in French 27 Nov 82 pp 1, 5

[Interview with Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by Patrick Frances--date and place not given]

[Text] [Question] What do you expect from President Mitterrand's visit?

[Answer] The aim on both sides is to show our good will. No agenda is scheduled. We will make a broad review of the international situation. We will also discuss bilateral subjects, although the latter are generally dealt with at other levels before or after the meeting.

[Question] Is it possible to talk of a honeymoon between France and India?

[Answer] That is a journalistic invention. No two countries can have absolutely identical views. But it is true that we have no major problem with France. Of course, that country belongs to a bloc whereas we are nonaligned, and our views differ on many subjects. But we believe in the coexistence of all countries because we are on the same planet and we must learn to live together. Thus it is up to us to find spheres in which we can cooperate and, if possible, to extend their scope.

[Question] What do you think of the French military presence in the Indian Ocean?

[Answer] What concerns us most is the existence of a nuclear base (American) on Diego Garcia.

[Question] How do you explain the fact that our economic relations are not on the same level as our political relations?

[Answer] For a long time the French scarcely bothered about India. France was mainly interested in French-speaking Africa. Today you are expanding your field of vision and making up to the fantastic potential offered by India.

[Question] France declares itself to be the Third World's ally. Do you see the practical effects of that?

[Answer] President Mitterrand has often expressed that view, especially at the Versailles summit. He has very clearly advocated global negotiations.

[Question] But surely that is just talk?

[Answer] Other countries have not even gone that far. You have to start somewhere. Moreover, France has attained the set objective in the sphere of aid to the developing countries.

[Question] Do you think that Brezhnev's death will bring about a change in the USSR's policy?

[Answer] Every country acts according to its national interest. In Brezhnev's day it was already possible to see a visible desire to reach some kind of agreement behind the tough talk. I personally think that the Soviets want to live in peace, taking account of their own problems.

[Question] Is the diplomatic recentering exercise which India seems to be carrying out the result of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan?

[Answer] We are opposed to any military presence in any country at all, but that has absolutely nothing to do with our foreign policy. Moreover, it is wrong to claim that our policy is not balanced. Indeed, if you count the number of times I have visited the United States and the USSR, you will observe that the number is equal--or even that there is an advantage in favor of the United States. As I told you, we believe in friendship with all countries. But it is true that the USSR has always stood by us in difficult times and that it helped us build up our industry after the United States and the FRG refused to help us. It was only then that we turned to the Soviet Union--to which we can also pay for our purchases in rubles, and that enables us to save valuable currency.

However, our main aim is to obtain what is in our best interest, and we have always tried to diversify our sources of supply. Moreover we also want to find partners on whom we can rely even in times of crisis. That is why we want to cooperate with France, because we think we can trust it.

Afghanistan: Nothing Can Be Obtained by Condemnation

[Question] With regard to Afghanistan, you have adopted an attitude toward the USSR based not on condemnation but on persuasion. You do not seem to have achieved many results?

[Answer] And what results has condemnation achieved? For our part we think that if there had not been that hasty universal condemnation, something could have been achieved. But the condemnation antagonized a country which feels surrounded by its adversaries and prompted it not to make concessions but to strengthen its position. In addition the same concerted condemnation was not pronounced on other interference by other countries in other places.

Indeed, nothing can be obtained by condemnation. But at present it is no longer a question of persuasion. What counts is what the Soviets regard as their national interest. They do not want to remain in Afghanistan because that is an

additional burden on them, but they cannot withdraw while the Afghan Government needs them. The latter thinks that as long as the rebels receive foreign aid it cannot ask the Soviet Army to withdraw. Nonetheless some talks are apparently now taking place between Pakistan and Afghanistan; let us hope they will achieve something.

[Question] Does the Soviet presence in Afghanistan pose a threat to India, in particular by prompting Pakistani rearmament?

[Answer] The latter would have taken place whatever happened. Pakistan merely took advantage of the situation. It found a pretext, a very good excuse. Similarly, the increased foreign presence in the Indian Ocean has nothing to do with the Afghan crisis.

[Question] Are we witnessing a breakthrough in Indo-Pakistani relations?

[Answer] We have been trying to normalize our relations with Pakistan for a long time. Today we are trying to revive the spirit of the Simla agreement (1972), and we are proposing a peace, friendship and cooperation treaty to Pakistan. Discussions are at present under way.

[Question] How do you view your role as chairman of the nonaligned countries?

[Answer] We believe that that movement still has its *raison d'être*. The proof of this is that, despite all the attempts which have been made to divide, denigrate and ridicule it, the number of countries wishing to join it has constantly increased. That expansion may give the impression of a lack of cohesion. It will be up to the next summit to strive to maintain the movement's strength and unity. It will also be up to it to increase cooperation with the developing countries, which is a necessary complement to North-South trade.

The Internal Crises Can Be Overcome

[Question] Do you not feel you are ruling a country whose unity will not outlive you? Revolt is stirring in all parts of the country.

[Answer] Quite the reverse. I am absolutely certain that Indian unity will survive in the future, provided the world itself is not destroyed. Indeed democracy makes all those little explosions possible, and if you tried to contain them, they would be likely to blow the country apart. The present problems are the price to be paid for progress. Everybody thinks that he should get more and everybody feels injured. And those who are best off are the most discontented. In the Punjab a group which claims to be religious is in fact exploiting religion for political ends. Why did they not meet their present demands when they were in power? The problem is that those who launch the agitation are overtaken by the extremists and doomed to take things further. The same is happening in Assam. But India has already experienced many similar crises in the past and has overcome them.

[Question] Is the situation in the Northeast as serious as some people say?

[Answer] The elections which have just been held in Nagaland gave rise to only a very few incidents. The situation in Mizoram is perfectly calm.

[Question] So foreign journalists can go there?

[Answer] No, you cannot. The British denied us access to the areas before independence.... Indeed the local populations themselves do not want to be visited by foreigners likely to interfere in their affairs. For instance, clashes have taken place in Nagaland in the past, but we have reached an agreement and then held elections.

[Question] India now seems to be opening up more to foreign technology and capital. Is it turning its back on its avowed desire for self-sufficiency?

[Answer] Not at all. We have always needed foreign aid. We now need more sophisticated equipment. Our objectives are still: First, self-sufficiency, because we must be able to face crisis periods alone; second, economic and social justice. We have a mixed economy which leans toward socialism--but a socialism very different from that of the communist countries.

[Question] Is that why the Indian Left is fighting you?

[Answer] No, it is because it realizes that it has no chance while I am here.

[Question] Do your debts not worry you?

[Answer] They remain at a reasonable level, but the economic situation is not satisfactory and is a source of concern. But I do not believe that the situation is uncontrollable.

[Question] Is the battle not lost in advance if you do not succeed in controlling the growth of your population?

[Answer] We have never pursued a policy of coercion in this sphere, as opposition propaganda has maintained. The latter's success has led to a setback in the birth-control policy. Today the problem is how to reach the poorest categories. We cannot coerce anybody in this sphere. We must persuade and educate people.... But our population has nonetheless doubled since independence. All our efforts in the sphere of education, health, employment and, especially, housing are futile in face of this sea of people.

I Do Not Have Time To Be Tired

[Question] Would you like to retire?

[Answer] First, I never really wanted to be where I am. For me, politics has never been a question of position but the expression of a very strong sense of duty. Whether I am prime minister or not does not matter. Moreover, I do not have time to be tired. Life is too exciting and its challenge must constantly be accepted.

[Question] Would you be happy to see your son, Rajiv, succeed you?

[Answer] I would, of course, like my son to be able to do something useful for his country. But it is up to my party and the country to decide who will succeed me.

[Question] What about Maneka, your daughter-in-law, who is calling on the voters to vote against your party?

[Answer] She had never been involved in politics. She is now very ambitious.

CSO: 4600/1379

ARTICLE NOTES GOOD DEVELOPMENT OF LPDR'S FOREIGN TRADE

Hanoi NGOAI THUONG in Vietnamese No 12, Dec 81 pp 22-24, 35

[Article by Vu Huu Tuu: "Some Notes on the Foreign Trade of the LPDR"]

[Text] The foreign trade of a country is always closely linked with its geographical conditions. This is also true with the LPDR. Therefore, to study the foreign trade of Laos I should think we need to know a few things about its geographical conditions.

Laos does not have a coastline but it has up to 4,825 kilometers of land borders, with Vietnam (1,957 km.), Kampuchea (492 km.), China (416 km.), Burma (230 km.) and Thailand (1,730 km.) adjoining it, including 1,500 kilometers of river borders. These neighboring countries naturally account for an important part in its total foreign trade value.

With more than 60 percent of its area being forests, Laos is potentially capable of expanding export of forestry products. Currently its industry is still small. As of the end of 1980, the LPDR had only nearly 20 central industrial enterprises, with 56 percent of them being state enterprises, 12 percent joint state-private enterprises and 32 percent private enterprises. Of the industrial installations the export-import workers usually pay attention to the following: the Nam Ngum power plant that exported 640-660 million kilowatts of power a year, the Bo Kua tin mine that had the exporting capacity of 90-100 tons per year, the Dong Heng gypsum mine that could export 20,000 tons annually, etc.

At the present time, agriculture is the largest economic sector in Laos. Of its population of 3,846,000, 3,056,800 persons (or 87.3 percent) live on agriculture. As of the end of 1980, more than 20 percent of the cultivated area belonged to co-operatives.

Its communications and transportation, which had been backward, were heavily damaged by the war. As of the beginning of 1981, there were only 500 kilometers

of asphalted roads out of over 38,000 kilometers of land routes. The Mekong River that flows along the length of the country, instead of being a convenient route, has too many large and small rapids that have not yet been destroyed and has been plagued by frequent ambushes laid by the Thai reactionaries along the Lao-Thai border section (1,500 kilometers long).

The difficult communications and transportation conditions, along with other factors, also keep the Lao countryside in the state of self-supplied and self-sufficient economy and slows down the development of the commodities-based economy here.

Right after the country had been completely liberated, the Lao party and government paid appropriate attention to developing the foreign trade. In his book entitled, "Some Major Experiences and Problems About the Direction for the Lao Revolution in the Present Stage," Kaysone Phomvihan, the party general secretary and premier, wrote: "Along with production, we must attach an extremely great importance to the commercial work, including both domestic and foreign trade." At the 7th conference to popularize the resolution of the LPRP Central Committee he once again stated: "In the present era, every country must have economic relations with foreign countries."

Thanks to this concern, the Lao foreign trade has been developed at a fast speed. As 1980 ended, the total value of the Lao foreign trade was about 87.5-88 million dollars. If 1976, the first year following the national liberation, were use as a point of reference for comparison, we would have the following table:

	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Export	100	112.96	114.34	343.70	456.77
Import	100	99.24	29.96	128.30	273.28

(Notes: The 1980 figures are our estimates. The figures of the preceding years are our calculations based on Statistical Notice issued by the LPDR State Planning Commission.)

In the 5-year period (1976-1980) the total foreign trade value increased by 3.3 times. That was quite a high rate of development.

Prior to the day of national liberation (2 December 1975), the entire foreign trade of the Lao Kingdom had been in private hands, particularly in the hands of foreign bourgeois (French, Thai, Chinese and Indians). After that date, numbed by the victory of the revolution, the large majority of these bourgeois exporters-importers fled to other countries. Those who had chosen to remain with the new regime mostly were those who had little capital; the most well-known among them were Leng Oudom, Siha, Khambai, Vilapandek and Somboun Inthavong.

To achieve state monopoly of foreign trade, the Lao party and government had to carry on the transformation, in appropriate forms, of those bourgeois exporters and importers and to switch them to other occupations.

In addition to this transformation among the private businessmen, the question of developing the state-operated foreign trade organizations has been raised in the LPDR. While resolving this problem, the Lao party and government have been seeking the most compact formulas being most suitable for the present economic and political conditions of Laos. Right after the seizure of power, the state established the Lao Export-Import Corporation. In 1979, another foreign trade corporation was established: Lao Trensit or Lao Foreign Trade Transportation and Delivery Corporation. In 1980, these two foreign trade corporations were merged with two domestic trade corporations to establish Lao Comex or Lao Commercial Corporation. The development of the Lao commerce (both domestic and foreign trade) in the years to come will require the specialization of business and certainly will not retain the present form of foreign trade organization.

In the 4 first years following the seizure of power, the export pattern showed that industrial and handicraft goods accounted for the largest percentages as the following table indicates:

Export pattern from 1976 to 1979

	(Unit: percent)			
	1976	1977	1978	1979
- Total foreign trade value	100	100	100	100
Consisting of:				
- Industrial and handicraft products	49.2	58.2	56.5	81.3
- Agricultural products	49.1	37.7	41.5	16.9
- Forest products	1.6	2.9	0.8	1.1
- Other goods	0.1	0.2	1.2	0.7

(Source of data: Figures have been compiled on the basis of the 1979 Statistical Notice of the Lao State Planning Commission.)

A number of goods from Laos that customers in Southeast Asia liked included Pak Song coffee, May Dou wood, cardamom, special resin, etc.

The above-mentioned export pattern did not truly reflect the country's economic level and capabilities, for as the total export value of an agricultural country showed, agricultural and forest products accounted for only 16.9 and 1.1 percent, respectively.

The lines of export goods were not widened very much. The 1980 annual statistical report still repeated the same lines of goods that had been reported in 1979: coffee, wood and wood products, cardamom, shellac, electricity, gypsum, tin ore, etc.

Due to the difficulties in connection with communications and means of transportation, many other lines of goods had not been exploited for export.

Due to a limited list of export goods and the fact that the need for import was great, in 1980 the export value was only nearly 75 percent of the import value.

In the import pattern that Laos followed in the recent years, the volume of consumer goods tended to decrease and the volume of capital goods to increase. That was a correct tendency that pointed to greater attention being paid to developing the country's production in order to build a prosperous Laos on the basis of an independent and self-ruled economy.

The pattern of Lao imports in the last few years is shown in the following table:

Import pattern in the first few years following the seizure of power

	(Unit: percent)			
	1976	1977	1978	1979
Total value of imports	100	100	100	100
Consisting of:				
I - Means of production:	41.5	44.7	78	68
1. Equipment and parts	0.7	6.1	7.6	10.8
2. Raw materials and fuels	40.8	38.6	70.4	57.2
II - Consumer goods	58.5	55.3	22	32
1. Grain and foods	52.8	41.3	1.6	14.6
2. Materials, clothes	1	3	10.3	8.5
3. Other consumer goods	4.7	11	10.1	8.9

(Source of data: Figures have been compiled on the basis of the 1979 Statistical Notice of the Lao State Planning Commission.)

However, in the list of goods imported from the capitalist market into Laos today, according to the Custom Office statistics, there still are goods that the country can produce, such as English cigarettes, West German and Japanese canned beer, etc. There still are luxurious consumer goods that flood the domestic market with large quantities, such as digital watches of various kinds, high-grade cotton and woolen materials, etc.

In industry, if attention were paid to using domestic raw materials, the need to import raw materials would be less critical; for instance, domestic tobacco can be used to replace imported cigarettes, old beer bottles to replace imported bottles for beer and soft drinks, etc.

The value of Laos's trade with the socialist countries only accounted for about 34 percent of the 1980 total foreign trade value. The familiar markets for Laos were those of Thailand, Japan, Singapore, Burma and Vietnam.

The above-mentioned data show that the Lao foreign trade, since the day the country as a whole was totally liberated, has been developed quite quickly and has been undergoing a transformation to become a socialist foreign trade. However, in the course of its progress, this sector still encounters considerable difficulties and obstacles and still has to fulfill many tasks that are far from minor, such as positively setting up the system of state monopoly of foreign trade, stepping up production of export goods in order to develop the export business, gradually balancing export and import, drafting the regulations for foreign trade management, building an organizational structure for foreign trade management and enterprise suitable for Laos, etc.

Laos is Vietnam's western neighbor. But the relations between Vietnam and Laos are not only the relations between neighboring countries but also the relations between comrades and brothers who really want to live and die together. Both the LPRP and VCP have grown up from the Indochinese Communist Party, which was established and taught by President Ho Chi Minh. In every inch of the Lao territory there was blood of Vietnamese and Lao combatants in the resistances against France and America; today, the combatants of the two nations are standing shoulder to shoulder in the fight against the Beijing expansionists and other reactionary forces.

On the basis of this special friendship the trade between the two countries has developed in the most favorable manner.

On the days the Vietnamese pavilion at the 1980 That Luang International Fair was open, members of all Lao nationalities were visiting it in large numbers and so busily from early morning till 2-3 o'clock at night to see the goods displayed and to get to know Vietnam through such goods, although our pavilion was in a modest location, the goods displayed there were not very numerous and the display area was not excessively large.

Every year the trade treaty between the 2 countries requires a trade value of about 5 million dollars on each side, which do not include the value of goods exchanged in accordance with agreements between the pairs of brotherhood provinces.

The lines of goods included in the trade are gradually widened. Vietnam's goods are welcomed by the Lao nationalities because their prices are reasonable and mostly because they can be available exactly at the times Laos needs them. However, our goods are still far from plentiful; their quality is far from high; and their appearance is not very attractive yet.

In addition, in the trade between the two countries, the international trading conditions have not yet been fully applied, with documents and procedures being irrational in some aspects and the trading relations still being oversimplified. We think that as the volume of goods being circulated continues to increase and the

list of goods becomes more diversified everyday, it is high time for the two countries to agree with each other about the fact that they can and need sign the General Conditions for Goods Delivery to regulate the business relations among their juridical and natural persons. To stabilize the foreign trade cash flow between the two countries for a long period, long-term (5- and 10-year) agreements must also be signed to go along with the long-term plans for development of the two countries' national economies.

It is in these forms of foreign economic cooperation that the special friendship between the two countries will be developed to deserve President Ho's teaching:

"If two people are in love, they can climb mountains,
Cross rivers and passes, no matter how many.
The love of our two countries Vietnam and Laos
Is deeper than the depth of the Red and Mekong Rivers."

5598
CSO: 4209/92

EDITORIAL HAILS SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM NATIONAL DAY

Vientiane SIANG PASASON in Lao 2 Sep 82 pp 1, 3

[Editorial: "Best Wishes to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on its 37th National Day"]

[Text] Today (2/9) the people throughout Vietnam and their close friends and allies among the Lao People together celebrate this day which was a great turning point in history--their 37th National Day. The atmosphere is happy and lively. The progress of the Vietnamese revolution in the past 37 years has been most difficult with great sacrifices by the brave Vietnamese people. But during the same period there were many famous, resounding victories. On 2/9/1945 after the victory of the August revolution, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first democratic state in Southeast Asia was founded. The workers and farmers state had just been founded a few months when it faced a new invasion from without. For 30 years they had to carry on their revolutionary war. The daring Vietnamese people stood shoulder to shoulder with the Lao and Khmer people in defeating two great imperialists: the French and the Americans. On 30/5/1975 the Vietnamese people fulfilled their goal of freeing the southern part of their country so that Vietnam could be one again and a socialist republic could be built under the skilled leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam. These heroes also allied themselves to our revolution and the Khmer revolution. They did their duty for world revolution well.

After the liberation of their country the Vietnamese people had to face a new and most dangerous enemy: the Chinese great power hegemonists used the Pol Pot, Teng Sary group, which had betrayed the Khmer people, as their lackeys to wage a provocative war against southwestern Vietnam. In February of 1979 they savagely invaded the northern provinces of Vietnam with a force of 500,000 soldiers. They did not admit the truth of this attack: that they had been taught a painful lesson. Today the Beijing great power hegemonists still persist in their error of using force against Vietnam--they send spies continuously into northern Vietnam to cause confusion. But events have clearly shown that each of their schemes has failed. The Vietnamese people have been able to maintain their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. They also maintained the fruits of their revolution and carried on unceasingly with their socialist revolutionary duties.

Because of their revolutionary spirit in all areas of work during the Five Year Plan to develop the economy (1975-1980) the Vietnamese People, despite an invasion and serious natural disasters, were able to achieve success in many areas in 1981. Food production for the country was more than 15 million tons. The area of rice production increased almost 6 million hectares. Animal husbandry was improved and in the same year the number of cattle reached 1,700,000 head. The value of all production of the economy including manufactures in 1980 was 12.8 percent greater than in 1975. During the same year the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was able to generate 5,639.5 million kilowatt hours of electricity. They produced 5.3 million tons of coal, 64 thousand tons of cement, increased cloth production to 175.3 million meters and produced 15.5 million tons of tea. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam achieved success in building socialism in the southern part of Vietnam--30 percent of the farmers are working collectively. They have gone from the primitive to the advanced: from production teams to agricultural cooperatives. At the same time in the north of Vietnam the improvement of agricultural cooperatives was fruitful. Up until 1980 4,200,000 farmers had joined in production. More than one million people went to build new economic areas and they cleared 50,000 hectares of new land. In addition education, public health, and culture were expanded as can be clearly seen. In 1980 there were 12,094,000 students in general education, 133,000 studying specialties, and 146,000 university students. In addition the number of hospitals increased to 2,396 with 198,000 beds. There were 12,400 doctors, 27,000 middle level doctors, 75,000 beginning level doctors and 13,600 midwives. In the area of culture Vietnam was able to produce 29.7 million books and 126 films.

These great victories and accomplishments have advanced the Socialist Republic of Vietnam enable Vietnamese socialism to develop greatly and making comrades of the Vietnamese people. Our people respect these victories which are like our own.

The revolutionary obligations of the two nations, Laos and Vietnam have made them very close in all areas. The Party, government and people of our two countries cherish the Lao-Vietnamese relationship which the great and beloved leader President Ho Chi Minh established and developed unceasingly. Not long ago our two countries joyfully celebrated the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Laos and Vietnam, an historic event in the development of the special relationship and solidarity between our two countries.

[Our country] agreed to give the "gold medal of the nation," which is our nation's highest honor, to Comrade Le Duan, the Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam agreed to give the "gold Star," which is the highest honor of Vietnam, to Kaysone Phomvihan the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and formerly [as published] the Prime Minister of the Democratic People's Republic of Laos. In addition representatives of our party and state traveled to present the "gold medal of the nation" to Comrade Truong Chinh and Comrade Pham Van Dong the outstanding leader of the Vietnamese people as well as celebrating the 37th National Day

of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. This is just one episode demonstrating the great friendship and solidarity between the Lao and Vietnamese people among the many showing that friendship and solidarity between Laos-Vietnam-Khmer has become a rule, a certainty. It shows the revolution is growing and it is the basis for the victory over the tricks and sabotage of the Chinese great power hegemonists who are conspiring with the American imperialists and other reactionaries.

On another occasion for celebration the Lao people throughout the country showed their deep gratitude to the party, government and people of Vietnam for their constant support of our revolutionary purpose according to the doctrines of Lenin and the workers international. They also blessed the skillful people behind the leadership of the Communist Party. Comrade Le Duan is the leader who achieved a greater victory than ever in building and protecting his beloved country and making the Socialist Republic of Vietnam into a strong socialist country determined to maintain peace in Indochina, Southeast Asia and the world.

8149
CSO: 4206/1

VIETNAMESE COOPERATION IN BOAT CONSTRUCTION DESCRIBED

Vientiane SIANG PASASON in Lao 2 Sep 82 pp 2, 3

[Article: "Steel Friendship Boat" by B. Kongmali]

[Text] The sky was clear blue and the breeze cool beside the gently flowing Mekong River. This morning, the 29th of August, was a time of increasing friendship in the economic and technical cooperation between the government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

At dock No 4 of the City of Vientiane the launching ceremony for the ship built by Lao-Vietnamese cooperation took place. The ceremony's friendly atmosphere included not only Lao and Vietnamese cadres and workers but also the honored presence of the Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation, the Vietnamese economic counselor in Laos, representatives from all sections of the country, and invited guests. They enthusiastically joined in the honoring ceremony on this final day of a period so important for the accomplishments of friendship.

Mr. Loui Sisoulat of the committee responsible for ship construction said that, as provided for by the treaty for economic and technical cooperation between the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the 1982 plan of the Department of Materials and Machinery of the Ministry of Public Works, Communications and Transportation included cooperation with the Department of Machinery and the ship building company of Haiphong of the Ministry of Communications and Transportation of Vietnam in building two steel oil tankers of 100 tons to be used by Laos.

Concerning this splendid cooperation he also said that Laos and Vietnam had consulted and allocated the work in detail as follows:

We Lao were primarily responsible for supplying the construction materials and tools plus cadres and workers equal in number to those supplied by the Vietnamese with various specialties.

The ship building company (Vietnam) was responsible for technical matters, the design, and leading the construction.

He also said that in order to honor the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on 2 September and the National Day of the People's Democratic Republic on 2 December the cadres and workers of both sides volunteered to compete to build and launch the first ship ahead of schedule. The schedule called for 44 days. The competition to honor the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam called for 4 days less.

This first tanker to be built and launched in the Mekong River was 32 meters long, 6.7 meters wide and able to carry 100 tons of oil.

He stressed that the second ship which was planned to be built to honor 2 December 1982 is ready to be built and launched to honor the National Day on 2 December.

The ceremony to launch the 100 ton steel tanker in the Mekong was completed successfully, and it showed the cooperation and friendship between Laos and Vietnam which has existed since our forefathers set out to achieve the great goal of building a socialist country.

8149
CSO: 4206/1

KENG KABAO PORT CAPACITY, CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS NOTED

Vientiane SLANG PASASON in Lao 3 Sep 82 pp 2, 3

[Article by Bounya Saipanya: "Keng Kabao Today and Tomorrow"]

[excerpts] The port of Keng Kabao is located about 47 kilometers north of Savannakhet City. After the ceremony was over we reporters had an opportunity to talk with the members of the responsible committee for the construction unit working at the port of Keng Kabao. Comrades Matsounmala, Phanthoulat, and Souimalavong all talked with us and gave us the following summary: They had followed the policies established by our party and state for building a socialist economy. Since our country does not have a path to the sea, we had to use the Mekong River as the important water transportation route for moving imports and exports. This being the case, it was necessary to begin building the port of Keng Kabao as one of many strategic ports primarily in Savannakhet Province. Comrade Matsounmala also told us that the construction of this port had begun early in 1980. Before construction began the technicians, that is all our workers, were troubled because the machinery and equipment for construction of the port would have to be modern. And such modern equipment was in distant countries many thousands of kilometers away. In addition the workers had no experience with this technology. After many difficult lessons on the high grass-covered ground here people were saying that evil spirits were loose. But after the project got under way we felt encouraged by many things. That which encouraged us the most in the construction of the port was the close attention paid by the party, the government, and the ministries: we got all the modern equipment and materials we needed. In addition we received cooperation from the provincial and district administrations as well as the localities and the people living near the constriction. The technicians and workers were diligent and hard working, and, even though things sometimes did not work out well, nevertheless everyone was patient and very devoted to their work unit and duties. Another thing which especially raised our spirits were the frequent visits of Mr. Nouhak Phoumsavan, Mr. Sanan Mr. Khamphoui and Mr. Singkapo. They roused us. Their exhortations were like bells. This gave courage to us workers to advance further. Although the construction of the port is not finished nevertheless progress is being made. Construction is now 60 percent complete. But only 40 percent of the funds have been used.

Comrade Matsounmala also said that in order to achieve successes in the first six months of this year for the Third Party Congress the workers worked

feverishly in a mass drive. During this time we drove 600 piles, we poured 146 meters of (concrete) wall one meter high with a base configuration of 0.20 x 0.60. We filled and packed 1040 cubic meters of embankment to prevent erosion. We placed 800 cubic meters of stone to protect the banks. We built 105 meters of drainage system. We built a roadway in the port area using 3320 cubic meters of packed earth covered with 1000 square meters of red earth. Construction of the fire station is 55 percent complete. The repair shop is 55 percent complete. The kitchen is 45 percent complete. The public toilet is 40 percent complete. The custom house is 30 percent complete. And the hospital is 35 percent complete. The construction in general has been a little slow but that is because the construction equipment and material come from abroad many days away. Sometimes we have had to wait if both construction sites have difficulties such as rain and flooding, which have caused work stoppages and delays. Therefore in order to carry on and impress the Party Congress, our committee came up with a plan to cut 1000 split posts sized C.20-0.30 for 180 meters of Mammakchap embankment to protect the riverbank next to the dock, make a 750 meter long channel and pave the 214 meter road down to the dock with concrete. Construction of the fire station is to be 100 percent complete.

The repair shop is to be 100 percent complete. The public toilet is to be 100 percent complete. The hospital is to be 100 percent complete. The customs house is to be 100 percent complete. Two water towers each capable of holding 15 cubic meters of water are to be 100 percent complete. A two story dormitory for the workers with 40 beds is to be 60 percent complete. At the end of the discussion Comrad Matsounmala, Comrade Phanthouslat and Comrade Souimalavong informed us of the capabilities and deficiencies of our engineers. This port will be ready to handle imports and exports during the dry season of 1984. The dock will have two modern cranes each capable of lifting more than five tons. There will be a warehouse capable of holding 1000 tons. It will also have storage and parking lots and housing for the port officials. We have been sepaking of the capabilities of the port. Compared with the Na Leng-Nong Khai, and Danang-Savannakhet if their [cargos] were shared, Keng Kabao will be able to handle about 320 tons of cargo a day. If one truck can carry six tons, there would be 53 trucks a day passing through Keng Kabao. This is a combined figure and also a low figure.

8149
CSO: 4206/1

PAKISTANI POLITICAL LEADER ON HAQ'S U.S. VISIT

GF131331 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 9 Dec 82 p 9

[Interview with Professor Ghafoor Ahmad, vice president of the Jama'at-e Islami Party--date not given]

[Text] Question: As a politician, what are your views on President Ziaul Haq's visit to the United States? How would you interpret it?

Answer: The impression that one gets from such tours of the president, his advisors and associates, is that they are free to make political parties and politicians the targets of their criticism during the course of these visits. They blame them for being the cause of their own inabilities. For us it becomes very difficult to answer their charges when they are abroad and the country is faced with danger internally and externally. The only thing that can be said in such circumstances is that only the head of state can reap benefits from such tours if he enjoys the confidence of the people and is answerable to them.

Question: In your opinion, do you think any economic or military benefits will accrue from the president's visit?

Answer: We should not try to obtain economic or military benefits from any tour because the superpowers have proved by their attitude that they are not interested in strengthening the military or economic position of the developing states, instead they have their own interests in mind. They ignore the needs of their friends and use them to obtain their own ends. This can be said in another way. That due to Pakistan's geopolitical situation and the position it has gained in the international community, the United States is desirous of forging better relations and of taking steps to strengthen our economic and social position. But I will repeat that better results can be achieved if we had a representative people's government.

Question: Do you agree that after President Ziaul Haq's visit to the United States, democracy will be restored in the country?

Answer: In my opinion, the restoration of democracy in this country has no connection with the current visit of the president because those countries which prefer to have democracy in their own countries do not necessarily wish

for the same in another country but prefer to have one or a few people at the helm of affairs so that they may be able to readily negotiate. Though they may profess to be champions of democracy, they do not favor democracy in developing nations. Their attitude indicates and the entire Pakistani nation knows that democracy is not a plaything which we can acquire with another's intercession. The Pakistani people will have to work for it, for obtaining their rights even if they have to make sacrifices for it.

Question: Don't you think that the president's visit is more significant in view of the presence of Soviet forces in Afghanistan and aren't the expectations that we have from the outcome of this visit realistic?

Answer: People think that the United States is the provider of our economic and military needs and we will be greatly helped in this by the visit. The fact is that at a certain point the interests of both the United States and the Soviet Union become one, there is no doubt that the presence of Soviet forces in Afghanistan is a great cause for concern in Pakistan, and if the U.S. Government and people feel the need for a stronger Pakistan, then we appreciate their concern. We want the Soviet Government and people to feel the same way too, and to discover the importance of Pakistan. They should announce that they are withdrawing their forces from Afghanistan to enable the Afghan people to form a government of their own choice and this will benefit both the Soviet Union and Pakistan.

We do not have any special expectations from this visit and the future attitude of the U.S. Government will reveal what they want from Pakistan

CSO: 4656/55

'JANG' COMMENTS ON REAGAN'S ASSURANCES TO PAKISTAN

GF131355 Lahore JANG in Urdu 9 Dec 82 p 3

[Editorial: "Assurances by President Reagan"]

[Excerpts] U.S. President Ronald Reagan at a reception held for President Ziaul Haq at the White House today said: The world, and especially the region in which Pakistan is located, is passing through a grave period of history and is facing very heavy challenges these days. In these conditions it is essential that countries searching for peace should sit together and try to find answers that will serve the interests of peace and security. President Reagan added: Today Pakistan stands in the frontline of the brotherhood of nations and is discharging a great responsibility toward mankind. President Reagan further said: The American people are well aware of what Pakistan is doing for the Afghan refugees. We are proud to say that you are doing a great service to humanity. The friendship between the United States and Pakistan has stood the tests of time and the relations between these countries are expected to grow even stronger with the passage of time. We shall work together for peace, progress and security. This cooperation between our countries will go on increasing, President Reagan assured President Ziaul Haq that after his American tour he will be convinced that the American people desire closer relations with Pakistan and desire greater cooperation and understanding between the two peoples in the coming years. President Reagan expressed the hope that with the establishment of stronger ties, the United States and Pakistan will be capable of taking a bolder stand in the interest of peace and security.

The United States is a great world power and the words of its president are certainly encouraging and reassuring. The services provided by Pakistan for the cause of peace and security in the world have been acknowledged before, at the various world forums and at the United Nations. Pakistani-United States friendship is as old as Pakistan itself. However, the past history shows that their friendship has not withstood every test of time. Since Pakistan signed a friendship agreement with the United States, it has been the victim of outside aggression three times and the Pakistani people have been complaining that the United States has not been helpful to Pakistan in difficult times. However, despite these bitter experiences, at the time of the Afghan crisis, Pakistan not only did not adopt an opportunist attitude or a policy of convenience, but stood up for the cause of right justice and

humanity and as a result, it has had to provide shelter to more than 3 million Afghan refugees. [passage omitted]

We believe that President Reagan indeed means what he has said. However, in view of the past history and our bitter experiences, the words of the president of the United States should be interpreted by actual deeds, so that in any future test of time Pakistan will not find itself friendless and alone.

As President Reagan has already praised Pakistan's efforts toward betterment of its relations with India and has expressed hope that these efforts will bear fruit, it also is essential that the United States keep in mind the overall needs of the security and integrity of Pakistan and not divide the idea of aggression into several types of aggression. It is imperative that so far as the security and territorial integrity of a country is concerned, its borders should be secure on all sides, not just on one particular side alone. The idea of security becomes ridiculous when the borders are secured from one side, while on the other side they are left open and undefended against aggression. The policy of treating the aggressor and the victim at par can turn the East Asia [as published] into another Middle East. Therefore, it is essential that President Reagan take concrete steps concerning the security of Pakistan and its humane stand and set the relations between our two countries on a sound basis and foundation so that they may not be destroyed by anyone.

CSO: 4656/55

OPINION POLL NOTES LEADERSHIP PREFERENCES

Bangkok PATINYA In Thai 29 Nov 82 pp 24-30

[Article by Sirimana Sattamai: "Results of an Opinion Poll on Important Political Figures: Who Do the Students and People Have Confidence In?"]

[Excerpt] In commenting on politicians, political parties or important political figures, the most important thing that should be analyzed is the confidence, or trust, that the people have in these people. And the way that will enable us to come to a fair conclusion without bias or prejudice entering in is to use the results of a public opinion poll on this matter as the basis for the analysis.

PATINYA would like to present the "results of an opinion poll taken among students and other people on their confidence in the ability of important political figures of today to solve the country's problems." The poll was taken by a research team from the Phithak Pracha Company Ltd. This team, headed by Dr Somchai Rakwichit, polled 603 students during the period 1-7 September 1982. This sample was composed of 120 students from Kasetsat University, 120 from Thammasat University, 120 from Chulalongkorn University and 243 from Ramkhamhaeng University. Another sample of 601 people [in general] was polled during the period 13-20 September 1982. This sample was divided by region as follows: 140 people from the north, 104 from the south, 95 from the northeast, 185 from the central region and the east, and 113 from Bangkok.

The research team of the Phithak Pracha Company polled the students and people to obtain their views on eight important political figures in Thailand. These eight were: Major General Praman Adireksan, the leader of the Thai Nation Party; Mr Bunchu Rotchanasathian, the deputy leader of the Social Action Party; Mr Phichai Rattakun, the leader of the Democrat Party; General Athit Kamlangek, the RTA CINC; General Kriangsak Chamanan, the leader of the National Democracy Party; Mr Samak Sunthonwet, the leader of the Thai Citizens' Party; General Prem Tinsulanon, the present prime minister; and M.R.W. Khukrit Pramot, the leader of the Social Action Party.

To conduct this poll, the people were interviewed directly. The researchers asked the following question: "After the election of MPs in April 1983, if

one of the following people were chosen to be the new prime minister, do you think that that person would be able to solve the country's problems?" Those interviewed were asked to select the one response, out of the five responses given, that they agreed with the most. The five responses given were:

1. Could not solve the problems and would make things even worse for the country.
2. Could not solve the problems; the situation in the country would stay the same.
3. Could solve some of the problems and would improve the situation in the country somewhat.
4. Could solve many of the problems and would greatly improve the situation in the country.
5. Don't know (because not familiar with the person or not familiar with what the person has done or with his capabilities).

Students: Cannot Find Anyone Who Gives Them Hope

The results show that in the view of the students (see Table 1), no one has the ability to "solve many of the problems and greatly improve the situation in the country." That is, no man received a majority (over 50 percent) for Choice 4. (See column 4 and compare with first three columns.)

However, looking at each man, it can be seen that 42.3 percent of the students felt that Major General Praman Adireksan does not have the capabilities to solve the problems and that the situation in the country would remain the same (Choice 2). As for the remaining choices, 24.9 percent felt that Major General Praman could solve some of the problems and could improve the situation in the country somewhat (Choice 3); 15.6 percent felt that not only could he not solve the problems but that he would make the situation even worse (Choice 1); 15.2 percent did not know because they were not familiar with him or they were not familiar with what he had done or with his capabilities (Choice 5); and 2 percent felt that he could solve many of the problems and greatly improve the situation in the country (Choice 4). This shows that Major General Praman does not have the confidence, or trust, of the students. This may be because, to date, Major General Praman has never clearly played an important role. And the Thai Nation Party is a party that has been part of the government so long that it has been nicknamed the "permanent government party," or "can't oppose, can raise only one hand." Besides this, it is also viewed as being the party of capitalists and warlords.

It can be said that the students have greater confidence, or trust, in Mr Bunchu Rotchanasathien that they do in major General Praman, with 44.9 percent choosing Choice 3 and 26.5, 11.6, 8.5 and 8.5 percent choosing choices 2, 1, 4 and 5 respectively. Mr Bunchu would probably receive a greater vote of confidence from the students if he could really slough off his "big capitalist" skin. Because with the image of a person who is creative, who dares to speak

and act and who has a strong economic team, Mr Bunchu has an advantage over other politicians.

Even though Mr Phichai Rattakun once served as the minister of foreign affairs in the Seni Pramot government, he has not played much of a role in Thai political circles. Thus, very few people are familiar with him. And Mr Phichai became the leader of the Democrat Party only recently -- and this is a period in which the image of the Democrat Party is at its nadir. The members of the party have split apart because of ideological conflicts and political interests. And when the party joined the government, it was attacked for not being able to solve the problems. This has resulted in the students having less confidence in Mr Phichai than in Mr Bunchu and the others (with the exception of General Kriangsak Chamanan). It can be seen that 35.8 percent of the students chose Choice 5, with 31.2, 19.1, 12.1 and 1.8 percent choosing choices 2, 3, 1 and 4 respectively.

General Athit Kamlangk is a professional soldier; he is not a politician. But because General Athit holds the position of RTA CINC, which is a military position that has always had the influence to decide whether a government "stays or goes," the role of General Athit has been pushed forward. Furthermore, the present political situation is very tense and ready to change at any moment. Thus, many people are focusing their attention on General Athit, regardless of what General Athit says or does. Although General Athit had not yet become RTA CINC when this poll was taken, because of the important role that he played in the events of 1 April and because he has risen to such high positions so rapidly, he is implicitly considered to be a frontrunner.

However, General Athit has constantly been attacked both openly and secretly, particularly in the period prior to his appointment as RTA CINC. For example, he has been attacked for liking to overstep [his authority] and interfere in the affairs of others and for wanting to be prime minister. These things have tarnished General Athit's image in the eyes of the students. But because of the fact that he is a resolute person who dares to make decisions to solve the problems and does not place himself above the problems, General Athit received a greater vote of confidence from the students than did the others (with the exception of Khukrit Pramot and General Prem Tinsulanon). That is, 42.1 percent of the students chose Choice 3, with 18.9, 17.1, 15.6 and 6.3 percent choosing choices 4, 2, 1 and 5 respectively.

As for General Kriangsak Chamanan, the results of the poll show that the students have less confidence or trust in him than anyone else. That is, 42 percent of the students felt that General Kriangsak would not be able to solve the problems and that he would make the situation even worse (Choice 1). As for the remaining choices, 32.5, 20.2, 2.8 and 2.5 percent chose choices 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

This may be because the students had a chance to see General Kriangsak's ability to solve the country's problems when he was prime minister, minister of finance and minister of agriculture. In addition, he has a reputation for being a heavy drinker, and he has been attacked for being involved in, or profiting

from, several national-level bids on work projects. All this has caused the students to gradually lose faith in General Kriangsak and overlook his good points, for example, his cleverness, or skill, in implementing his foreign policy and his lofty political spirit, which was shown when he resigned from the position of prime minister, instead of carrying out a coup or dissolving parliament, and stood as a candidate in the by-election in Roi Et.

Mr Samak Sunthonwet has played a great role ever since the Thai Citizens' Party captured almost all the seats in parliament in Bangkok during the last election. The Thai Citizens' Party has always served as the opposition party in parliament and has never joined with other political parties in serving as a support for the government. This has enabled the Thai Citizens' Party to escape the attacks that have been made on the other parties that joined the government. These other parties have been strongly attacked for fighting over benefits and ministerial positions (to the point where there have been splits among these political parties) and for not being able to solve the problems after joining the government.

While most of the other political parties are frequently in the news, little is heard about the Thai Citizens' Party. And it constantly carries on activities as if campaigning for votes. For example, it produces Thai Citizens' rice and Thai Citizens' fish sauce and sells these things at a lower price than at the markets. This has given the Thai Citizens' Party a better image than the other parties. However, the Thai Citizens' Party, particularly Mr Samak, the leader of the party, has been attacked by its opponents. Its opponents claim that the MPs who belong to this party do not carry out their duties in parliament and that they allow Mr Samak to "hog the limelight." They claim that if Mr Samak were not there, the Thai Citizens' Party would dissolve.

And there is the case in which the Public Health Section, Faculty of Public Health, Mahidol University, organized a "volunteer project to develop the slum areas in the Bangkok Metropolitan area." The MPs from Bangkok divided the money given to them by the government to develop the province. Each was given 2.5 million baht by the Office of the Budget to carry out the work in this project. The project achieved good results and the people living in the slum areas benefited greatly. But later on, there were reports that politics had begun to interfere with the work of this project. The MPs who had been entrusted with the money tried to pressure those people carrying out the work to do what they [the MPs] wanted and to distribute leaflets to popularize their party. But those carrying out the work refused because they did not want to become the tool of anyone. The Bangkok MPs thus demanded that the money remaining be returned, which resulted in this project coming to a halt. This in turn made the people who had benefited from this project very dissatisfied. The opposition groups used this to attack the Thai Citizens' Party, and the Thai Citizens' Party lost many votes because of this.

Besides this, Mr Samak has been attacked as, or charged with, being an aggressive person who likes to boast a lot in order to get the people to believe him. All this has tended to tarnish Mr Samak's image in the eyes of the students. This can be seen from the results of the poll. That is, 22.2 percent of the

students felt that if Mr Samak became prime minister, he would not be able to solve the problems and the situation in the country would become even worse (Choice 1). It can be seen that, for this choice, Mr Samak was second only to General Kriangsak. As for the other students, 36.8 percent, 28.2 percent, 8.8 percent and 4 percent chose choices 3, 2, 4 and 5 respectively.

General Prem Tinsulanon is a prime minister of Thailand who received great acclaim (when he first took over as prime minister) as a knight on a white horse who would put an end to poverty in the land and generate order and progress for the country. But after a period, the faith that the people had in him began to decline since he could not solve the country's problems as the people had hoped. For extending his term as RTA CINC, he was strongly attacked as being a dictator who was reluctant to give up power and who wanted to keep his position. There was also the disgraceful telex matter, the matter of a former military aide selling weapons, the matter of a minister distributing money in a toilet to buy the votes of MPs and the matter of his being involved in the problems of three oil companies and seven insurance companies. All of these things have led to General Prem being viewed as an irresponsible person who holds himself above the conflicts, who uses the "divide and rule" method and who likes to play favorites. He has used only southerners, classmates from Suan Kulap [High School] and cavalry officers, or SSC people as they are called, in the important political positions or used people with bad backgrounds to serve as ministers.

However, the thing that will help General Prem keep his position as head of government is his image as an honest person who is loyal to the nation, religion and monarchy. This is accepted by people in general, and these are good qualities that most people feel a prime minister should have. For these reasons, the students and people have not rejected General Prem totally. The results of the poll show that, in the view of the students, General Prem's image is still better than the others, with the exception of Khukrit Pramot. That is, 40.8 percent of the students chose Choice 3, with 35.3, 15.3, 7.3 and 1.3 percent choosing choices 2, 4, 1 and 5 respectively.

The final important political figure whom the research team asked about was M.R.W. Khukrit Pramot. Based on the results of the poll, it can be said that the students have more confidence and faith in him than in any of the others. This can be seen from the fact that 48.9 percent of the students chose Choice 3, with 23.4, 17.4, 7.0 and 3.3 choosing choices 2, 4, 1 and 5 respectively.

This may be because Khukrit Pramot is a senior, knowledgeable person of good birth who has more political and administrative experience than the others. And he is skilled at playing the political game. However, Khukrit Pramot has been attacked about personal matters and about the work that he has done. For example, newspapers have called him "the old poisonous man who is full of tricks." When Khukrit was prime minister, or when the Social Action Party joined with other parties to form a government, he was not able to solve the country's problems. He was attacked for administering the country as if he were seeking votes or as if he were doing things just to benefit his party rather than really trying to solve the problems. Examples are his policy on

revolving capital and his policy on lowering the tax on soft drinks. And the ministers who belonged to the Social Action Party frequently had conflicts with the ministers from other parties on how to carry out things. This resulted in the government being unable to solve the problems.

Because of these things, the majority of the students do not feel that Khukrit would be able to solve many of the country's problems or greatly improve the situation if he were to become prime minister again. This can be seen from the fact that only 17.4 percent of the students chose Choice 4. A total of 82.6 percent chose one of the other choices.

The People: In Agreement With the Students

As for people [in general], the results of the poll are shown in Table 2. It can be seen that the views of the people are in agreement with those of the students. That is, none of the important political figures mentioned by the research team received a majority vote of confidence in their ability to solve many problems and greatly improve the situation if they become prime minister. Thus, it can be said that the majority of the people have not placed their hopes or faith in these people. They do not believe that these people will really be able to relieve the suffering of and bring happiness to the people. And something worth noting is that, when the results are considered in greater detail, the views of the people are in agreement with those of the students on many points. For example, the majority of the students and people agree that of all these people, M.R.W. Khukrit is the one most able to solve the problems (although no one is willing to place their hopes in anyone). Next, in order, come General Prem, General Athit, Mr Bunchu, Mr Samak, Major General Praman, Mr Phichai and General Kriangsak. (Compare the percentages for each choice for each person.)

The people and the students agreed that the important figures who would not be able to solve the problems and who would make the situation even worse were, in order, General Kriangsak, Mr Samak, General Athit, Major General Praman and Mr Phichai. As for Mr Bunchu, General Prem and M.R.W. Khukrit, the students and people ranked them differently. (See the numbers, or rankings, given in parenthesis in column 1.)

The person for whom the students and people chose Choice 5, that is, "don't know (because of not knowing them or not being familiar with their work or abilities), the most was Mr Phichai. He was followed by Major General Praman and Mr Bunchu. The person with the smallest percentage for Choice 5 was General Prem. As for the others, the percentage of students and people choosing this choice varied. This is because the students and people were not equally interested in, or attached different importance to, these people.

As for why each of these [political] figures was used in analyzing the views of the people, the reasons are the same as those given above for the students

and so they will not be repeated here. But one point worth noting is that, comparing tables 1 and 2, it can be seen that each of the percentages in column 1 (Choice 1) are bigger than the corresponding percentages in column 1 of Table 2. Conversely, each of the percentages in column 5 of Table 1 are smaller than the corresponding percentages in Table 2. This shows that the students are more familiar with the important political figures asked about by the research team than are the people and they have followed their activities more than the people have. This is because, basically, the students are more aware politically than are the people.

When this observation is taken into consideration along with all the other points analyzed here, it can be said in summary that the data obtained from this poll have a confidence level of at least 95 percent.

Table 1: The results of the opinion poll taken among students on their confidence in the ability of important political figures to solve the country's problems

Important Political Figure	Choices (%)					Total N=603
	1	2	3	4	5	
Major General Praman Adireksan	15.6(3)	42.3(1)	24.9(6)	2.0(7)	15.2(2)	100
Mr Bunchu Rotchanasathien	11.6(5)	26.5(6)	44.9(2)	8.5(5)	8.5(3)	100
Mr Phichi Rattakun	12.1(4)	31.2(4)	19.1(8)	1.8(8)	35.8(1)	100
General Athit Kamlangk	15.6(3)	17.1(8)	42.1(3)	18.9(1)	6.3(4)	100
General Kriangsak Chamana	42.0(1)	32.5(3)	20.2(7)	2.8(6)	2.5(7)	100
Mr Samak Sunthonwet	22.2(2)	28.2(5)	36.8(5)	8.8(4)	4.0(5)	100
General Prem Tinsulanon	7.3(6)	35.3(2)	40.8(4)	15.3(3)	1.3(8)	100
M.R.W. Khukrit Pramot	7.0(7)	23.4(7)	48.9(1)	17.4(2)	3.3(6)	100

Note: Choice 1: Could not solve the problems and would make things even worse for the country.

Choice 2: Could not solve the problems; the situation in the country would stay the same.

Choice 3: Could solve some of the problems and would improve the situation in the country somewhat.

Choice 4: Could solve many of the problems and would greatly improve the situation in the country.

Choice 5: Don't know (because not familiar with the person or not familiar with what the person has done or with his capabilities).

Numbers in parenthesis indicate ranking (ordered from largest to smallest).

Table 2: The results of the opinion poll taken among people on their confidence in the ability of important political figures to solve the country's problems

Important Political Figure	Choices (%)					Total N=601
	1	2	3	4	5	
Major General Praman Adireksan	8.8(3)	35.6(3)	30.6(6)	2.2(8)	22.8(2)	100
Mr Bunchu Rotchanasathien	4.8(6)	31.1(4)	39.6(3)	9.5(5)	15.0(3)	100
Mr Phichi Rattakun	6.1(4)	24.1(6)	18.6(7)	7.3(6)	43.8(1)	100
General Athit Kamlangk	8.8(3)	22.0(7)	43.1(2)	17.5(3)	8.6(5)	100
General Kriangsak Chamana	34.1(1)	39.6(1)	16.5(8)	4.8(7)	5.0(6)	100
Mr Samak Sunthonwet	15.0(2)	27.0(5)	36.4(4)	11.8(4)	9.8(4)	100
General Prem Tinsulanon	4.8(6)	39.4(2)	35.6(5)	18.3(2)	1.9(8)	100
M.R.W. Khukrit Pramot	5.5(5)	20.2(8)	50.6(1)	18.8(1)	4.9(7)	100

Note: Same as for Table 1

11943

CSO: 4207/34

CASE FOR BAHT DEVALUATION ARGUED

Bangkok KHAO CHATURAT in Thai 29 Nov 82 pp 12-17

[Article by Phansak Winyarat: "To Remain Inactive Or to Devalue the Baht?"]

[Text] "Every bank that knows the real situation will definitely overbuy dollars now even though the prime minister has said that the baht will not be devalued," said an officials from one of the four major banks to Chaturat.

Why have the major commercial banks made preparations to the point of purchasing dollars in excess of daily needs? This question is easy to answer. Everything points to another devaluation of the baht if the government is prepared. All the circumstantial evidence indicates that the baht must be devalued not later than the end of the year. If it is devalued later than that, the opportunity will have passed and problems in selling goods will arise. And what will result will be a demonstration by unemployed laborers and farmers.

Based on an informal survey of the views of financial experts and bankers, most say that:

The two main things that have made it necessary to devalue the baht again are that a crisis in international financial circles has arisen. The world economy is in a recession. Interest rates in the United States are very high. The economic situation in Europe is even worse than that in the United States. The Japanese economy is in such poor shape that several large companies in Japan have had to lay off people or not given bonuses to their executives. This has led to people buying dollars to insure their incomes, and more money than usual has been deposited in the United States. Second, when there were rumors that Mexico would go bankrupt, the people there withdrew their money from the country and put it in the United States. In France, the franc was devalued. People there transferred their money to the United States. For these reasons, the value of the dollar has shot up as compared with other international currencies. The problems for Thailand is that the baht was devalued last year, and it was thought that this would provide help for a relatively long period. But since the baht is tied to the dollar, when the value of the dollar rose, it pulled the value of the baht up along with it as compared with other currencies even though our economy is not good.

A news source in international money market circles said:

"Look, the value of the Thai baht as compared with the Japanese yen, as measured against each other at the end of last year, is now 20 percent higher than the former exchange rate. And this is even higher when it is compared with the French franc. The value of the baht has risen 40 percent against the franc since the end of last year. And it has risen at least 15 percent against the mark."

This clearly shows that, while the country's economy is in a recession and exports are having problems, the value of the baht as compared with that of our trading partners is higher than what is realistic. It is believed that, next year, this unrealistically high value of the baht will cause great problems for the government and people.

"Actually, the companies that produce seafood for export have been moaning ever since the middle of the year. But this has not done them any good because the government had just been criticized harshly and there was no chance of another devaluation then," said a bank official to Chaturat.

At present, those who will profit from the high value of the baht are certain companies that want to squeeze their competition.

"The method used is to import goods at a time when after-expense costs are low in accord with the exchange rates. For example, if the finance manager is clever, the power company that serves as a distributor for Japanese goods will immediately know when the value of the yen declines in relation to the baht. The company will hurry to import goods and arrange to pay immediately since it can pay in yen. After it imports the goods, it can immediately wage a price war to defeat its competitors in the marketplace. As far as I know, some companies are doing this. They can do this because the value of the baht is presently higher than that of the yen," said a news source in electricity generating circles to Chaturat.

What are the reasons for having to take action now?

"I too am not sure whether the government will devalue the baht or not. But if it does, it must do so now or no later than December. We must see whether the increased amounts of goods shipped to markets after the baht is devalued will benefit the farmers or not. Second, will the government's budget next year be cut back? If it is not, a way must be found to collect taxes. To collect taxes, exports must increase. This will increase the incomes of the people and allow more taxes to be collected. We know that, next year, the budget will not be in balance. And there are problems with agricultural and industrial goods. Are people afraid of being blamed? We do not have to be too afraid because, at present, importers are not importing very many goods since this is the end of the year. And no one dares keep much stock on hand. The effect is slight. Banking circles have a glut of baht left and do not know what to do with it. They cannot eat it. Thus, this would not affect banking circles. No one has borrowed so many dollars that they would complain if the baht were

devalued. The cost of the fuel that we import would not amount to much. Previously, oil cost \$34 or \$32 per barrel. But now it is only \$28 or \$29 per barrel. Thus, this would have little effect. Here, we must look to see if the people in the cities will complain. We must give much thought to such matters. We must decide whether we want to help the farmers or what. Lowering the exchange rate will affect the people in the cities who use many imported goods. But it will have no negative impact on the farmers. Rather, the impact will be a positive one. Those who might be in trouble are those who borrow from foreign syndicates. If the baht is devalued again, things will be very difficult for them," said the top money manager of a bank that has daily foreign currency transactions amounting to 460 million baht each month [sic].

A government advisor complained about money matters to Chaturat, saying:

"It is said that devaluing the baht will not help the farmers, but that is not true. Last year, if the baht had not been devalued, earnings from rice exports would have fallen 38 percent. But because the baht was devalued, earnings fell only 28 percent. Look, if earnings had fallen 38 percent then, there would have been trouble. Now, we are saying that the baht should be devalued again because, this is now the best time. But others say that this matter should be left alone since it is a political matter."

If the results of a survey conducted by Bangkok Bank can be believed, next year, 34.18 percent of the national income will be derived from agricultural exports, 32.26 percent will come from industrial production and the remaining 33.56 percent will come from the export of marine products and other miscellaneous items.

What is sure is that the sale of industrial and marine products depends on the exchange rate between the baht and the other currencies, which the baht is now rising against in accord with the dollar.

Even though Dr Suphachai has denied that the time has come to devalue the baht, that is just the duty of a good central banker, who must not tell what he is going to do. But the various reasons presented show that the government must devalue the baht for the benefit of the people. And if the government does not want to take action, during the first 3 months of next year, it will be a very frightening time economically, financially and politically.

Interview With Dr Suphachai Phanitchaphak, the Director of the Governor's Office of the Bank of Thailand

Chaturat: Why hasn't the national bank taken responsibility and given advice to the prime minister on devaluing the baht now, even though there are reasons for doing so, particularly to help next season's exports?

Dr Suphachai: As for devaluing the currency in order to help exports, actually, this is only one factor in the use of the devaluation measure. For the most part, in devaluing the currency in order to have the greatest effect possible

on exports, there are many other factors too. For example, the country must be able to manage the foreign markets. That is, the markets must belong to us. Second, our goods must have sufficient elasticity, that is, when we adjust the price, orders must increase. Third, the prices abroad must be directly connected to the prices that we refer to as "farm front" prices. Fourth, world trade must not be burdened with too many strict market controls as is beginning to be the case now. If all four of these conditions hold, I think that a devaluation would help exports.

As for the first condition, we can see clearly that we do not have any markets of our own. For the most part, we are a minor trader with little influence on foreign markets. Thus, throwing things onto foreign markets is of little consequence.

Concerning the second condition, our products are mostly agricultural products, which are very inelastic. If prices are changed, demand is always limited. If you have many industrial goods, that is one thing. But that is not the case with us.

As for the third condition, which concerns market control, at present, there is too much control. Regardless of where we try to sell our goods, it is not a matter of whether our goods are priced well. Rather, things depend on the quotas given us by the purchasing countries. Textiles are a good example. We have to bargain over quotas every year. As for the quota of 500,000 tons of cassava, this will have to be renegotiated in another 2-3 years. They won't give this to us. It doesn't matter whether the price of our cassava is high or low. It doesn't matter whether our textiles are expensive or cheap. The sale of our televisions to England doesn't depend on whether our televisions are cheap or expensive.

As for the final condition, there is no connection between foreign prices and our "farm front" prices. This is because our system does not have continuity. Our devaluation last time did have some effect on the farmers. But not much. It wasn't the case that we devalued the baht by 10 percent and the farmers received a 10 percent increase [for their goods]. This is tied to an interconnected apparatus.

[Question] Then, it isn't necessary for the national bank to give advice to the prime minister on devaluing the baht at this time?

[Answer] No. That is, if it is said that we must now solve the export problem, I think that solving this problem depends on many factors. Concerning several of the factors, we must go compete on the outside and build a domestic apparatus. And concerning prices, I will say that they are now less important because, at present, they are already very low. If the baht is devalued in order to lower the prices of our goods abroad, I am not sure that this will really stimulate sales. And suppose that the baht is devalued and there are suddenly negotiations to lower international prices. There is a recession on. They must lower their prices in turn. If prices are lowered 5 [percent], the country

will get the full 5 [percent]. But this will affect "farm front" prices by only 1 or 2 percent.

[Question] The promises by bureaucrats that the baht will not be devalued are generally believed to be promises aimed at preventing the banks or others involved in foreign currency activities from reaping a profit. They are not real promises are they?

[Answer] Based on my understanding, the government's statements can be summarized as follows:

First, we have clearly announced that the last devaluation of the baht achieved clear results. The baht was devalued by a proper amount, neither too much nor too little. It was not very inflationary and not very burdensome. There were some adverse effects; we admit this. But they were not so severe that there will be any long-lasting consequences. And there were good results too. For example, the good effect on the export-import problem can be seen clearly. this is because we did things at the proper time and did those things that were really necessary.

Second, we have stated that we have seen the experiences of foreign countries, and we have looked at ourselves. Everything indicates that if such a policy is used too often, that is, if a floating exchange rate policy is used, the bad will outweigh the good. The simple, basic reason for this is that a developing country constantly has an imbalance of trade. Everyone knows that we are constantly short on foreign currency. Particularly on the spot market, we always have a shortage of foreign currency. We can repay [the money] only if people invest money in our country, if the government borrows the money, if the private sector borrows money or if foreign organizations send money to aid us. Thus, on the spot market, there is speculation in a continual decline in the value of the baht.

Third, we must not view the monetary policies as tools only. The policies concerning the value of the baht must be viewed as a target too. The target is that we need to maintain economic stability and security. This refers to the stability of the value of the baht domestically, that is, maintaining a low rate of inflation, and abroad, that is, keeping the value of the baht secure. Thus, we do not view the value of the baht as a tool to solve the problems. The problems should be solved using other policies too, not just the value of the baht. We feel that the value of the baht is a target and that it must be kept secure. It should not be changed until it is really necessary.

It is these three principles that we announced. We have not been talking without having supporting principles. If we did, that would result in the people not believing us when it really is necessary to adjust the value of the baht. and if it becomes necessary, you can be assured that it really is necessary. This will be better than allowing the situation to drag on as happened in Mexico. If it becomes necessary, we will do so without delay. Mexico delayed for a year with very bad results.

[Question] Can you give a picture of just what the situation would be like for it to "be time" to devalue the baht again?

[Answer] It must resemble the situation of last year. That is, almost everything was terrible. Domestic interest rates were much lower than foreign interest rates. There was no flow of capital into the country, only out of the country. [Rates overseas] were 20 percent or higher; here they were only 18-19 percent. The value of the dollar rose more than 20 percent as compared with other hard currencies in the world. This is different from this year. At most it has risen 20 percent against the yen, but it has not risen much against other currencies. And trade was very poor. Last year, you may remember, exports did not rise at all during the first 6 months of the year. During the first 3 months, exports declined while imports increased more than 20 percent over normal. But this year is just the opposite. This is the first year in 10 years that imports have declined. They have declined 9 percent while exports have increased 10 percent. The balance of trade deficit has declined 70 percent. This is unprecedented in Thai trade. And there was much speculation on the value of the baht last year. There is none this year. Speculation reached the point where, to make advance purchases, a person had to pay a premium of 8-10 percent, with 2-3 percent being the norm. There was the situation in which exporters were unwilling to sell their foreign currency and held onto it in order to speculate. Those who needed to buy foreign currency in order to pay for imports were in great trouble. Last year, we had to pay \$200-250 million per month for oil, with the amount reaching \$300-350 million some months. These things all happened simultaneously last year. Last year's trade policy closed all the doors and set minimum export prices quotas. Groups of exporters were selected and buyers were stationed in Hong Kong. There were seven to eight stages in exporting goods. But instead of promoting exports, these things all had a negative effect. This was another reason. Thus, we have constantly worked to correct these things. Such things may be possible in the future. But we were given a warning last year. We have made better preparations. We definitely cannot allow our reserve fund to decline 100-200 million [baht] each week like last year, which was another reason behind the devaluation. It is true that, at present, we do not feel that the prices of our agricultural products on world markets are good. But then, which country does have good prices?

[Question] Aren't there Thai goods that are sensitive to a devaluation of the baht?

[Answer] Yes, there are. Some things are sensitive. Examples are rubber and leather goods and industrial products concerned with meat and seafood products that are sold to Japan. These things have clearly been affected because the value of the yen has fallen almost 25 percent since last year. When we devalued the baht by 9 percent, this greatly helped to reduce prices, and more goods were sold. Prices had to be reduced. Don't think that goods cannot be exported. You must think about the principal and interest. They also reduced the time for keeping surplus goods last year. The interest rate was 20 percent. Selling

all the goods by lowering the cost is better than having to keep the goods on hand. But if we adjust the value too often, we will be adjusting it to solve just one problem. I think that it must be adjusted only to solve problems that are quite critical. We are trying to keep things from reaching that point. The things that have been discussed are an attempt to keep things from reaching that point. It's like this, some people say that the baht was devalued at a time when everything was terrible and that this was too painful; the problems had become too complicated. Thus, wouldn't it be better for us to do this at a time when everyone is prepared and understands why the government must make this decision? As for these people, they believe that we will have to devalue the baht again before the end of the year.

Making an adjustment when it is not necessary is like trying to do something that is referred to as "using a weak tool to solve a hard problem." It is using the "soft option." That is, our financial structure is still in fairly good condition. You can ask any economics professor [and they will tell you] that the value of the baht is adjusted mainly in order to compensate for the difference in the rate of inflation in Thailand and that in our trading competitors. But at present, the inflation rate here is 5 percent. The average inflation rate of our important trading competitors is certainly above 5 percent. In ASEAN, the rate is above 5 percent. The places where inflation is below 5 percent are Japan, Germany and the United States. Inflation is still running at 7 percent in England. Thus, the theory known as "purchasing price parity" refers to adjusting the value of the currency in order to put the currencies on a par. But things are just the opposite here. Our inflation rate is lower than that in our important trading competitors. You just watch. This year, our balance of payments situation will be in equilibrium or even show a surplus. We had a surplus disequilibrium in both 1980 and 1981. For the near future, we know that, in order to sell large quantities of goods, we must make preparations. We must prepare measures for selling rice, measures for selling our goods abroad. We must compete like this and not just adjust the value of the baht.

[Question] Are you sure that the value of the dollar will not rise again?

[Answer] I will put it like this. During the past 2-3 years, the dollar has been at a 7-year high. During these past 2-3 years, it has risen almost 20 percent a year.

[Question] That's very alarming.

[Answer] Yes, it is alarming. As compared with the yen, the dollar has risen from 180 yen to the dollar to its present level of more than 280 yen to the dollar. Thus, this is very alarming. It is not logical; there is neither "rhyme nor reason" to this. The inflation rate in Japan is lower than that in the United States, its balance of trade situation is better than that of the United States. Japan's budget deficit, as compared with its national income, is better than that of the United States. Per capita production is higher than in the United States. The only advantages held by the United States are a

higher interest rate and greater freedom from political insecurity. Both Europe and Japan are now experiencing some insecurity. Europe is unsure about Russia, and Poland owes German banks large sums of money. In Japan, the major political parties that form the government cannot agree on a new leader. This is unprecedented. I'm not sure when the value of the dollar will fall, but I can say and affirm that it must fall. And when it declines, it will decline greatly. Because people will not forget the events at the end of the 1970s when the dollar fell about 10 percent each time. The only thing I cannot tell you is when this will happen. But the dollar will definitely decline.

The rise of the baht

The following shows that the baht, as compared with other important currencies, has risen along with the U.S. dollar, to which the baht is tied. The countries whose currencies are presented here are all major trading partners of Thailand.

	Pound	Mark	Yen	Hong Kong dollar	Franc	Lira
Nov 1981	44.78	10.36125	10.61625	4.04125	4.09125	0.01925
Dec 1981	43.29	10.09625	10.32675	4.00625	3.99	0.0189
Jan 1982	42.8675	9.82	9.92125	3.895	3.855	0.0183
Feb 1982	41.86	9.625	9.66125	3.88	3.775	0.01785
Mar 1982	40.76	9.49875	9.275	3.91125	3.6575	0.0173
Apr 1982	40.99	9.78625	9.71875	3.915	3.71	0.01755
May 1982	40.84	9.74	9.95625	3.975	3.72	0.0175
Jun 1982	39.6725	9.3325	8.9925	3.85125	3.35	0.0165
Jul 1982	39.605	9.265	8.88625	3.8375	3.315	0.01645
Aug 1982	39.10	9.11	8.74375	3.735	3.2375	0.01615
Sep 1982	38.825	9.0425	8.49625	3.67875	3.19	0.0160
Oct 1982	38.4125	8.975	8.2225	3.33375	3.16	0.0156

Note: Exchange rates based on a rate of 22.90 baht per \$1. the baht is compared with the English pound, the German mark, the Japanese yen, the Hong Kong yen, the French franc and the Italian lira.

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THAILAND

PROTESTS, COMMENTARIES ON BUS FARE INCREASE REPORTED

Economic Issues, Dissatisfaction

Bangkok MATICHON SUT SAPPADA in Thai 14-20 Nov 82 pp 4, 5, 38

[Article: "Public Opinion: Is Raising the Bus Fares Justified?"]

[Text] "Bus fares Increase. Be careful of a coup."

Why are these two sentences connected since each concerns a different matter? Political circles think that certain members of the Democrat Party have spread such rumors with the hope of suppressing the opposition of the people. But even though they spread such rumors, there have been demonstrations.

In order to learn what the people think about this, the Social Research Institute of Chulalongkorn University and MATICHON SUT SAPPADA cooperated to conduct a public opinion poll on the topic "The Effects of Increasing Bus Fares." The poll was conducted between 6-8 November.

Who Was Included In the Poll and How Large Are Their Incomes?

A random sample of 500 people was selected. The sample was composed of 100 laborers, 75 private officials and employees, 75 state enterprise officials, 73 vendors, 75 government officials, 32 small merchants and 70 students.

19.2 percent of the sample had incomes of between 2,400 and 2,999 baht per month; 18.8 percent had incomes between 1,800 and 2,399 baht per month; 13.8 percent had incomes between 1,200 and 1,799 baht per month; 12.4 percent had incomes below 1,200 baht per month. Only 1.4 percent had incomes over 12,000 baht per month.

A Comparison of Fares Before and After 6 November 1982

The average daily fares paid by various occupational groups prior to the bus fare increase announced on 6 November were as follows:

33 percent spent an average of 7 baht a day on bus fares; 32.6 percent spent an average of 4 baht per day on bus fares; 18.8 percent spent an average of

10 baht per day; 9.4 percent spent an average of 13 baht per day. Only 1.2 percent spent 19 baht per day on bus fares.

After the bus fare increase was announced on 6 November, the average amount spent on bus fares by these people was as follows:

27.6 percent spent an average of 7 baht per day on bus fares; 22.2 percent spent an average of 10 baht per day; 19.8 percent spent an average of 13 baht per day; 12 percent spent an average of 4 baht per day; 7.8 percent spent an average of 16 baht per day; 2.2 percent spent an average of 22 baht per day. And 1.2 percent had to spend an average of 25 baht per day on bus fares.

Concerning the number of people in the families of those sampled who had to ride the buses, 21 percent had three people, 20.8 percent had four people, 15 percent had five people and 10.4 percent had six people.

After the Fare Increase, What Were the People of Bangkok Spending?

After the bus fares were increased, average monthly bus expenses for families living in Bangkok were as follows:

30 percent paid an average of 1,000 to 1,499 baht per month in bus fares; 28.8 percent paid an average of 500 to 599 baht per month; 15.6 percent paid an average of 100 to 499 baht per month; 8.8 percent paid an average of 2,000 to 2,499 baht per month.

Public Opinion On the Fare Increase

Concerning the opinion of this sample of people on the increase in the bus fare from 1.5 baht to 2 baht for the first 10 kilometers:

83 percent were against this; 9.4 percent did not express a view; and only 7.6 percent agreed with the increase.

The views of the various occupational groups as to why the Mass Transport Authority increased bus fares were as follows:

47.04 percent felt that there was great dishonesty and corruption; 37.78 percent felt that the administration was inept; 10.49 percent felt that operating costs were very high and that this had led to a shortage of capital.

Opposition to the Price Increase, a Democratic Method?

As for the views of the various occupational groups as to whether the people have the legal right, in accord with a democratic system, to carry on demonstrations to get the government to review the bus fare increase:

84.4 percent felt that people have the legal right to do this in a democracy. Only 3.6 percent felt that people do not have the legal right to do this within the framework of a democratic system.

Concerning those who felt that people have the legal right to demonstrate, 93 percent of the laborers, 92.86 percent of the students and, interestingly, 94.87 percent of the private officials and employees were of this opinion.

BMTA Services, How Impressive?

Concerning the "general feeling of the various occupational groups about the present services of the Bangkok Mass Transport Authority (drivers, conductors and condition of the buses)":

76.8 percent were dissatisfied. Concerning those who were dissatisfied, 94 percent of the laborers and 92 percent of the state enterprise officials were dissatisfied.

14 percent did not take a position about the services of the BMTA. Only 4 percent said that they were satisfied with the services of the BMTA.

"Thamatanti" in the Eyes of the People

Concerning the "views of the various occupational groups about the administration of the director of the BMTA, Mrs Wimon Siriphaibun, or "Thomayanti":

63.6 percent were dissatisfied; 15.5 percent did not take a position; only 3.6 percent were satisfied.

Concerning those who were dissatisfied, 88 percent of the students, 72 percent of the private officials and employees, 70.67 percent of the state enterprise officials and 64 percent of the government officials were dissatisfied.

Concerning those who were satisfied, 18.7 percent of the vendors and 4.29 percent of the students were satisfied. As for the laborers, it turned out that all of them were dissatisfied.

Dissatisfaction With Mr Wira Musikaphong

Concerning the "views of the various occupational groups about the BMTA administrative policies of Mr Wira Musikaphong, the deputy minister of communications":

69.6 percent were dissatisfied; 9.4 percent did not take a position; and 4.4 percent were satisfied.

Concerning those who were dissatisfied, 92 percent of the laborers, 80 percent of the private officials and employees and 76 percent of the state enterprise officials were dissatisfied.

Concerning those who were satisfied with Mr Wira Musikaphong, 16.44 percent of the vendors, 6.25 percent of the small merchants and 2.86 percent of the students were satisfied.

People's Feelings About Admiral Amorn Sirikaya

Concerning the "views of the various occupational groups about the bus policies and administration of Admiral Amorn Sirikaya, the minister of communications":

53.8 percent were dissatisfied; 20.0 percent did not take a position; and 4.0 percent were satisfied.

Concerning those who were dissatisfied, 89 percent of the laborers, 53.33 percent of the state enterprise officials, 52 percent of the private officials and employees, and 52.86 percent of the students were dissatisfied.

As for those who were satisfied, 8.22 percent of the vendors, 6.67 percent of the state enterprise officials, and 6.25 percent of the small merchants were satisfied.

Tairong Suwannakhiri, a Spokesman Who Is Becoming Well Known

Actually, the bus fare increase is a matter than concerns Mr Wira Musikaphong and Mrs Wimon Siriphaibun mainly. But Mr Tairong Suwannakhiri, in his position as a government spokesman, has shot to the forefront of attention.

Concerning the "views of the various occupational groups about the statements and attitude of Mr Tairong Suwannakhiri toward the bus fare increase":

71.8 percent were dissatisfied; 7.8 percent took no position. Only 2.8 percent were satisfied with the statements by Mr Tairong Suwannakhiri.

Concerning those who were dissatisfied, 92 percent of the laborers, 74.67 percent of the state enterprise officials, 71.43 percent of the students, 69.33 percent of the private officials and employees, 61.64 percent of the vendors and 66.67 percent of the government officials were dissatisfied.

As for those who were satisfied, 8.22 percent of the vendors and 6.25 percent of the small merchants were satisfied.

Now That Bus Fares Have Been Increased, What Is the Image of the Government Like?

Concerning the "views of the various occupational groups about the present government's policies for solving the economic problems":

69.2 percent were dissatisfied; 8.6 percent took no position; and 7.2 percent were satisfied.

Concerning those who were dissatisfied with the economic policies of the government, 93.33 percent of the private officials and employees, 93 percent of the laborers, 65.33 percent of the government officials, 61.33 percent of the state enterprise officials and 60 percent of the students were dissatisfied.

As for those who were satisfied with the economic policies of the present government, 18.67 percent of the government officials, 17.81 percent of the vendors, 4 percent of the private officials and employees and state enterprise officials, and only 1 percent of the laborers were satisfied.

What Does the Poll Show?

From the above poll conducted by the Social Research Institute of Chulalongkorn University and MATICHON, it can be concluded that the majority of the people are unhappy about the government increasing bus fares.

Besides being dissatisfied with those who are directly involved in this matter, that is, Mr Wira Musikaphong, the deputy minister of communications, and Mrs Wimon Siriphaibun, or "Thomayanti," the director of the BMTA, the people are also unhappy with Admiral Amorn Srikaya, the minister of communications.

And the person who has suddenly and unexpectedly become a target of criticism is Mr Trairong Suwannakhiri.

And something that the government must accept is that this dissatisfaction is not limited just to bus fares. People are also dissatisfied with the government's economic policies, which have made things very difficult for them.

We have presented the results of the poll. We must wait and see how much attention the government gives to these results.

Average monthly expenditures on bus fares for families in Bangkok after the fare increase:

Average monthly expenditures on fares (Baht)	Number	Percentage
1. 100-499	78	15.60
2. 500-999	144	28.80
3. 1,000-1,499	150	30.00
4. 1,500-1,999	44	8.80
5. 2,000-2,499	44	8.80
6. 2,500-2,999	21	4.20
7. 3,000-3,499	11	2.20
8. 3,500-3,999	3	0.60
9. 4,000-4,999	2	0.40
10. Over 5,000	3	0.60
Total	500	100

Editorial Notes Popular Anger

Bangkok PATINYA in Thai 22 Nov 82 p 1

[Editorial: "Don't Go Crazy With Power; Don't Challenge the People"]

[Text] Concerning the efforts of the leaders of the country to solve the various problems, besides solving the problems in accord with the law, many times dark powers have been used to oppress each other. For example, in forming a government, whenever one group has refused to step down or talks to get people to give up their power have failed, rumors of a coup have flourished. When MPs hold debates and greatly criticize the government, there are rumors that the military is preparing to take over. And whenever the government suffers a defeat in parliament, the military moves forces about. And even if the laborers appeal for justice, senior officers are sent to join the negotiations. What is strange is that the use of such oppressive power usually achieves results. No one dares to protest. Thus, superficially, it seems that the use of such power is correct and this results in the powerholders becoming even more obsessed with their power. Besides this, this is like a habit-forming substance for those who do not have power. But when they stay near the powerholders, they would like to have power too.

The latest show of obsession with power took place when students and other people asked that the bus fare increase be reviewed. The only thing that the students and people did was to point out the trouble caused them by this. Some groups helped gather the views of these people and presented them to the government, and other groups submitted proposals to the government. But the government did not pay any attention to any of this. People in the government announced that the government was aware of this matter, without mentioning any attempt to solve the problem, and they resolutely refused to change their ideas. They also threatened that, if there was opposition, the buses would cease operating and people would have to walk or that something like 6 October might happen if the students protested.

From what PATINYA has observed about the proposals of the students and people, there has been reasonable opposition to the increase in bus fares. Everyone knows that the Bangkok Mass Transport Authority has been operating at a loss ever since it started operations. It is also known that its administration has been inefficient and that corruption is widespread. This has increased the losses. Thus, placing the entire burden on the people is unfair. Everyone, including the deputy minister of communications, knows that simply increasing bus fares will not really solve the problem. Thus, those who have demonstrated want the government to end its involvement in running the BMTA and allow the private sector to take over operations. Or if the government continues to operate [the BMTA] itself with this considered to be a public service, the corruption, or illegal loss of money, in the BMTA must be eliminated so that it can be trusted. Then, if bus fares are increased, the people will accept this. And in improving things, taxes from Bangkok Metropolitan should be used to help.

But the government did not heed these appeals, or proposals. This can be seen from the fact that the government said that the people of Bangkok are selfish and like to take advantage of the rural people. They also dared [people] to conduct a nationwide poll (even though this is the duty of the government). Besides closing its "ears and eyes" and refusing to consider the ideas of the people, the government also distorted the appeals, or proposals, of the students and people in order to mislead the people and get them to clash with each other. This is a method that dictators always like to use.

Since the government has begun to use both legal powers and dictatorial methods to suppress the people, the events that have occurred are not like 6 October as the government thinks. Rather, they are more like 14 October, when the people rose up and drove out the dictators.

During the events of 14 October, people who hated dictatorial power destroyed the Metropolitan Police Headquarters. They also destroyed police kiosks and traffic-light kiosks in order to "let off steam." But if such events as 14 October occur, it will be the buses of the BMTA that will be destroyed. If such events actually occur, just punishing those few who ignited the situation is not worth it.

Student Organization Statements, Individuals

Bangkok PATINYA in Thai 22 Nov 82 pp 21-23

[Statement by the Ramkhamhaeng University Student-Body Organization and Interviews With Protestors]

[Text] The Government Must Stop Causing Trouble For the People

Concerning the bus fare increase announced by the Bangkok Mass Transport Authority (BMTA), which people in general are aware of, the Ramkhamhaeng University Student-body Organization has constantly followed this matter. Thus, it issued a statement immediately following the BMTA's announcement of a bus fare increase. It has called on the government to review this new motion in a careful and just manner.

Based on the actual condition of the state enterprises in general, it can be seen clearly that these are centers of the influential groups whose political and financial interests are intertwined in various forms. These groups are not at all interested in the knowledge, abilities or honesty of the people who are responsible for administering things. This is one reason that the various state enterprises have constantly operated at a loss. In particular, everytime the administration has failed, the state enterprises that are public utilities have had to shift the burden onto the masses. A disgraceful example of this is the fact that the water works had a leak amounting to 49 percent. This was not due to technical weaknesses but to shameful dishonesty.

The BMTA is another state enterprise where the administrators and managers have been careless and "dull witted." To solve the problems, they have raised fares without considering the trouble this causes the people. They have announced that the BMTA is losing 71 million baht a month and that after the fares are raised, it will still be losing 30 million baht a month.

In order to preserve the interests of the country and to eliminate the troubles of the people, the student organization would like to submit the following three courses of action to the government for its consideration:

1. It can announce the sale of all BMTA activities to the private sector to have it carry on operations, under supervision, with the old fares in effect. This should be done in order to determine whether the private sector is really ready to carry on operations. If it is, the BMTA should be sold immediately.
2. There can be competition between the BMTA and the private sector by selling operating rights for approximately 10 to 20 percent of the routes, with the routes that have an average number of passengers serving as the standard. If the private sector can operate using the old fares and can provide better service than the BMTA, there is no reason for the government to preserve the BMTA as a bus graveyard.
3. Concerning the 4,912 regular buses and the 662 airconditioned buses, for a total of 5,574 buses, and the 23,258 employees of the BMTA, details should be disclosed concerning monthly salary levels, allowances, bonuses, maintenance costs, fuel costs and other expenses. Also, the details of how things are administered should be revealed since it is suspected that there is more corruption and "cronyism" in the BMTA than the people think.

The student organization would like to tell the government again that unfairly placing the full burden on the passengers by increasing bus fares is something that the students and people, who have been adversely affected by this, can no longer remain idle about. Ramkhamhaeng University Student-Body Organization, 8 November 1982.

The Views of a Protester: Interview with Mr Bamrung Duangphummek, the secretary-general of the Ramkhamhaeng University Moral Movement Party

PATINYA: What are your reasons for opposing the bus fare increase?

Bamrung: The bus fare increase will create difficulties for the people, for poor people and students, and it is not the right time. Services should be improved first. And some other way should be found instead of solving the problems by raising fares, which is solving the problem at the end.

PATINYA: What results do you think the BMTA's solution will have?

Bamrung: By trying to solve the problem this way, it will not be possible to reduce losses since this is simply an attempt to solve the problems at the end. Raising fares is not the correct way to solve the problems. The problems should be solved at their source. For example, the BMTA has too many workers; these excess workers should be laid off. The buses used should be new ones. The BMTA should not purchase used buses since it costs 500-600 baht a day to repair them. Actually, the buses should not break down but the buses in use now break down every day. Trying to solve the problem by raising fares is useless since the internal system is not good.

PATINYA: The government has said that it will not lower the fares since the BMTA cannot exist otherwise. This is the same as disputing the objections of the students and people. What will you do now?

Bamrung: We will continue to protest since this is really a hardship.

PATINYA: Dr Trairong said that the government is not moving in an opposite direction to that of the students and people but that the students are moving in an opposite direction to that of the government. How true is this?

Bamrung: There is a policy of moving in opposite directions because the government is not considering the hardships of the people. It prefers to go against the wishes of the majority of the people. We feel that what we are doing is protecting the interests of the majority, who are suffering hardships. Thus, if the government continues to hold to its old resolutions, we think that the two sides will move in opposite directions concerning their policies, which are different.

PATINYA: Concerning the three proposals submitted to the government, if the government actually accepts them, do you think that the problems can be solved?

Bamrung: I am sure that losses will decline and that the problems will be solved in the end.

PATINYA: Do you think that the fare should be 2 baht?

Bamrung: Service is not good and yet they have increased the fare to 2 baht. Its not worth it since at present their service is not worth 50 satang. If they want to charge 2 baht, they should first improve services; we would then be glad to pay 2 baht.

Mr Phichai Phromchun, Secretary-General of the Ramkhamhaeng University Student-Body Organization

PATINYA: What is their administration like?

Phichai: There is much corruption. For example, they use fake tickets to pocket fares. Everyone from drivers to inspectors are in on this. The money does not go to the state. Much gasoline is drawn but only a small percentage is used by the buses; the rest is sold and the money is pocketed. Administration

is terrible. People with no administrative knowledge have been put in administrative positions. They do not even know "what is what" in the various sectors. They looked for their own people in order to rake in the profits and then said that they are suffering losses. I don't believe this. And there is the observation that, while they say they are suffering losses, they are still paying bonuses. If they were really operating at a loss, they would not be paying bonuses. Thus, at present, they are both paying bonuses and claiming that they are suffering losses. Since they are doing such contrary things, there is definitely something suspicious about this.

PATINYA: Aren't you afraid that something like 6 October will occur?

Phichai: We have protested by making proposals in the leaflets that have been distributed widespready. We are not protesting against everything. For example, we support the government on the race track issue. We do not want to prolong things. But if there is injustice, we must oppose this to the end along with [submitting] proposals, which we feel can lead to a solution of the problems. Thus, we are not afraid.

Mr Chanyarong Kongchok, a Student Who Participated In the Protest Demonstration

PATINYA: Why did you protest?

Chanyarong: I was strongly opposed to the bus fare increase. The present cost of living is already very high. The bus fare increase will cause even greater hardships. There should not be any further hardships like this unless it is really necessary.

PATINYA: Who are the ones who will be affected the most?

Chanyarong: Those with low incomes and the workers. The students will have difficulties because they do not earn an income. They will have to spend at least 240 baht a month on bus fares since they have to go to school every day.

PATINYA: What is the administration of the BMTA like?

Chamyarong: The BMTA has many "leaks." For example, gas requisitions provide a way for people to get gas without paying for it. They sell some of the gas for their own profit. Parts are used wastefully. This should not be happening. Service is terrible. People should not have to pay 2 baht; 50 satang would be enough. The contract signed with the repair garage was a bad contract. That is, regardless of whether vehicles break down or not, the BMTA must still pay 500-600 baht a day. Is this right? Also, there are too many officials. I do not know why they hired them when there isn't enough work for them. But they receive their salary every month.

Editorial Urges Government to Note Feelings

Bangkok MATICHON in Thai 18 Nov 82 p 4

[Editorial: "Don't Be Contemptuous of the People"]

[Text] On 6 October 1973, a group of students, scholars and politicians appealed to the government to promulgate a constitution and hold democratic elections. But instead of listening and solving the problem peacefully, the government at that time ordered the demonstrators arrested and charged them with instigating a rebellion in the country and of carrying on communist activities.

This greatly displeased the people, and, in the end, the number of demonstrators grew from just a few hundred to hundreds of thousands. Finally, the two field marshals and one colonel known as the three "despots" had to leave the country in a great hurry.

The lessons provided by the events of October 1973 can be summarized succinctly: "Don't be contemptuous of the people."

The demonstration by a group composed of students, laborers and people from various circles in order to protest the government's bus fare increase began with a small group. They began demonstrating because of the hardships caused by this action taken by the government. Actually, this movement would probably not have grown if the government had done things in a well-planned way.

But the Ministry of Communications, through Mr Wira Musikaphong, did not do anything beforehand to make the people understand. And in its announcement, it did not give people any hope after the fare increase.

Even more important, Mr Tra.rong Suwannakhiri, the government spokesman, made a threatening statement with the intention of "pouring gasoline" on the "fire of discontent" of the people.

And that is not all. A report from government circles indicated that the government would attempt to raise train fares and telephone rates, which would hit the people even harder.

The dissatisfaction among the people has spread greatly and the methods of protest have increased in variety to the point where 10 people have gone on a hunger strike in order to get the government to have a change of heart and change its standards in increasing fares. But instead of the government representative viewing this matter in a responsible manner, Mr Wira Musikaphong asked sarcastically: Don't those who are starving themselves have food to eat?

The demonstrations in the bus fare matter that have taken place and that look as if they will expand reflect the lack of responsibility on the part of the government and the difficulties of the people. If the government remains

indifferent to this as if it is contemptuous of the people, it is not known how strong the ill effect of this will be on the government and the people.

Editorial Blasts Threat of Mass Murder

Bangkok MATUPHUM in Thai 8 Nov 82 p 4

[Editorial: "The Lesson of the People"]

[Text] The hardship imposed by the increase in bus fares is a hardship that the people of Bangkok and its suburbs cannot escape. This is a rather painful hardship since, instead of the country's officials talking about why it is necessary to increase fares, those who "consume the taxes" of the people bellowed out threats.

The deputy minister of communications, Mr Wira Musikaphong, said that the "current income is not enough and fares will have to be raised again."

The director of the BMTA, Mrs Wimon Siriphaibun, said that the "people of Bangkok are not gods who should be given everything free."

As for the government spokesman, Mr Trairong Suwannakhiri, an egotistical person, his duty is to inform the people so that they understand. He should do this politely. But instead Mr Trairong shouted at the people and various organizations that were appealing to the government not to increase bus fares at this time, saying that the government would not back down. He also said that he had once been a university professor and that he knew the weaknesses of the students if they wanted to settle things like 6 October.

The sternness of the people responsible for raising the bus fares and the oppressive attitude of the government spokesman show us that the reality of this society is that these people feel that they have done many things for the people and shouldered the responsibility for governing the country. Thus, under their administration, the people must kowtow to them. If not, they will act in an oppressive way and scold the people like this.

This is definitely not a principle of democracy. Rather, this is what is done by superiors who feel that the people are their slaves and that they can do whatever they want without having to give any reasons or waste time discussing the facts.

This is very strange. One of these people has been an MP in many administrations, although he failed in his bid for election the last time and had to find a new stage. Another ran for election but was rejected by the people. He benefited and rose to a position of influence because of his close relationship with the prime minister. As for the third one, we know what she is like. She has never listened to criticism or become embarrassed.

This is an important lesson for those people who have not arisen and demanded their rights. Because in a democracy, the people are much "bigger" than these people. These people do not have the right to take advantage of the people, who are the ones who elected them.

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